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THOMAS CARLYLE'S WORKS.

"The Ashburton Edition"

IN SEVENTEEN VOLUMES.

VOLUME XVI.

CRITICAL AND MISCELLANEOUS ESSAYS.

VOL. II.

CRITICAL AND MISCELLANEOUS

ESSAYS

COLLECTED AND REPUBLISHED

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CONTENTS OF VOLUME II.

	PAGE
Luther's Psalm	1
Schiller	7
The Nibelungen Lied	53
German Literature of the XIV. and XV. Centuries	105
Taylor's Historic Survey of German Poetry	157
Characteristics	191
Goethe's Portrait	229
Death of Goethe	233
Biography	245
Boswell's Life of Johnson	261
Goethe's Works	323
Corn-Law Rhymes	375
On History again	403
Diderot	413
Count Cagliostro	475
Death of Edward Irving	537

APPENDIX.

No. 1. The Tale	545
2. Novelle	573
Summary	589

CRITICAL AND MISCELLANEOUS ESSAYS.

LUTHER'S PSALM.

16

LUTHER'S PSALM.[1]

[1831.]

AMONG Luther's Spiritual Songs, of which various collections have appeared of late years,[2] the one entitled *Eine feste Burg ist unser Gott* is universally regarded as the best; and indeed still retains its place and devotional use in the Psalmodies of Protestant Germany. Of the Tune, which also is by Luther, we have no copy, and only a secondhand knowledge: to the original Words, probably never before printed in England, we subjoin the following Translation; which, if it possess the only merit it can pretend to, that of literal adherence to the sense, will not prove unacceptable to our readers. Luther's music is heard daily in our churches, several of our finest Psalm-tunes being of his composition. Luther's sentiments also are, or should be, present in many an English heart; the more interesting to us is any the smallest articulate expression of these.

The great Reformer's love of music, of poetry, it has often been remarked, is one of the most significant features in his character. But indeed, if every great man, Napoleon himself, is intrinsically a poet, an idealist, with more or less completeness of utterance, which of all our great men, in these modern ages, had such an endowment in that kind as Luther? He it was, emphatically, who stood based on the Spiritual World of man, and only by the footing and miraculous power he had obtained there, could work such changes in the

[1] FRASER'S MAGAZINE, No. 12.

[2] For example: *Luthers Geistliche Lieder, nebst dessen Gedanken über die Musica* (Berlin, 1817); *Die Lieder Luthers gesammelt von Kosegarten und Rambach, &c.*

Material World. As a participant and dispenser of divine influences, he shows himself among human affairs; a true connecting medium and visible Messenger between Heaven and Earth; a man, therefore, not only permitted to enter the sphere of Poetry, but to dwell in the purest centre thereof: perhaps the most inspired of all Teachers since the first Apostles of his faith; and thus not a Poet only, but a Prophet and god-ordained Priest, which is the highest form of that dignity, and of all dignity.

Unhappily, or happily, Luther's poetic feeling did not so much learn to express itself in fit Words that take captive every ear, as in fit Actions, wherein truly, under still more impressive manifestation, the spirit of spheral melody resides, and still audibly addresses us. In his written Poems we find little, save that strength of one 'whose words,' it has been said, 'were half battles;' little of that still harmony and blending softness of union, which is the last perfection of strength; less of it than even his conduct often manifested. With Words he had not learned to make pure music; it was by Deeds of love or heroic valour that he spoke freely; in tones, only through his Flute, amid tears, could the sigh of that strong soul find utterance.

Nevertheless, though in imperfect articulation, the same voice, if we will listen well, is to be heard also in his writings, in his Poems. The following, for example, jars upon our ears: yet there is something in it like the sound of Alpine avalanches, or the first murmur of earthquakes; in the very vastness of which dissonance a higher unison is revealed to us. Luther wrote this Song in a time of blackest threatenings, which however could in nowise become a time of despair. In those tones, rugged, broken as they are, do we not recognise the accent of that summoned man (summoned not by Charles the Fifth, but by God Almighty also), who answered his friends' warning not to enter Worms, in this wise: "Were there as many devils in Worms as there are roof-tiles, I would on;"—of him who, alone in that assemblage, before all emperors and principalities and powers, spoke forth these final and forever memorable words: "It is neither safe nor prudent to do aught against conscience. Here stand I, I cannot otherwise. God assist me. Amen!"[3] It is evident enough that to this man all

[3] 'Till such time as, either by proofs from Holy Scripture, or by fair reason 'or argument, I have been confuted and convicted. I cannot and will not recant, '*weil weder sicher noch gerathen ist, etwas wider Gewissen zu thun. Hier stehe* '*ich, ich kann nicht anders. Gott helfe mir. Amen!*'

Pope's Conclaves, and Imperial Diets, and hosts, and nations, were but weak; weak as the forest, with all its strong *trees*, may be to the smallest spark of electric *fire*.

EINE FESTE BURG IST UNSER GOTT.

Eine feste Burg ist unser Gott,
Ein gutes Wehr und Waffen;
Er hilft uns frey aus aller Noth,
Die uns jetzt hat betroffen.
Der alte böse Feind
Mit Ernst ers jetzt meint;
Gross Macht und viel List
Sein grausam' Rüstzeuch ist,
Auf Erd'n ist nicht seins Gleichen.

Mit unsrer Macht ist Nichts gethan,
Wir sind gar bald verloren:
Es streit't für uns der rechte Mann,
Den Gott selbst hat erkoren.
Fragst du wer er ist?
Er heisst Jesus Christ,
Der Herre Zebaoth,
Und ist kein ander Gott,
Das Feld muss er behalten.

Und wenn die Welt voll Teufel wär,
Und wollt'n uns gar verschlingen,
So fürchten wir uns nicht so sehr,
Es soll uns doch gelingen.
Der Fürste dieser Welt,
Wie sauer er sich stellt,
Thut er uns doch Nichts;
Das macht er ist gericht't,
Ein Wörtlein kann ihn fällen.

Das Wort sie sollen lassen stahn,
Und keinen Dank dazu haben;
Er ist bey uns wohl auf dem Plan
Mit seinem Geist und Gaben.
Nehmen sie uns den Leib,
Gut', Ehr', Kind und Weib,
Lass fahren dahin.
Sie haben's kein Gewinn,
Das Reich Gottes muss uns bleiben.

A safe stronghold our God is still,
A trusty shield and weapon;
He'll help us clear from all the ill
That hath us now o'ertaken.

The ancient Prince of Hell
Hath risen with purpose fell;
Strong mail of Craft and Power
He weareth in this hour,
On Earth is not his fellow.

With force of arms we nothing can,
Full soon were we down-ridden;
But for us fights the proper Man,
Whom God himself hath bidden.
Ask ye, Who is this same?
Christ Jesus is his name,
The Lord Zebaoth's Son,
He and no other one
Shall conquer in the battle.

And were this world all Devils o'er,
And watching to devour us,
We lay it not to heart so sore,
Not they can overpower us.
And let the Prince of Ill
Look grim as e'er he will,
He harms us not a whit:
For why? His doom is writ,
A word shall quickly slay him.

God's Word, for all their craft and force,
One moment will not linger,
But spite of Hell, shall have its course,
'Tis written by his finger.
And though they take our life,
Goods, honour, children, wife,
Yet is their profit small;
These things shall vanish all,
The City of God remaineth.

SCHILLER

SCHILLER.[1]

[1831.]

To the student of German Literature, or of Literature in general, these Volumes, purporting to lay open the private intercourse of two men eminent beyond all others of their time in that department, will doubtless be a welcome appearance. Neither Schiller nor Goethe has ever, that we have hitherto seen, written worthlessly on any subject; and the writings here offered us are confidential Letters, relating moreover to a highly important period in the spiritual history, not only of the parties themselves, but of their country likewise; full of topics, high and low, on which far meaner talents than theirs might prove interesting. We have heard and known so much of both these venerated persons; of their friendship, and true coöperation in so many noble endeavours, the fruit of which has long been plain to every one: and now are we to look into the secret constitution and conditions of all this; to trace the public result, which is Ideal, down to its roots in the Common; how Poets may live and work poetically among the Prose things of this world, and *Fausts* and *Tells* be written on rag-paper and with goose-quills, like mere Minerva Novels, and songs by a Person of Quality! Virtuosos have glass bee-hives, which they curiously peep into; but here truly were a far stranger sort of honey-making. Nay, apart from virtuososhíp, or any technical object, what a hold have such things on our universal curiosity as men! If the sympathy we feel with one another is infinite, or nearly so,—in proof of which, do but consider the boundless ocean of Gossip (imperfect, undistilled Biography) which is emitted and imbibed by the human species daily;—if every secret-history,

[1] FRASER'S MAGAZINE, No. 14.—*Briefwechsel zwischen Schiller und Goethe, in den Jahren* 1794 *bis* 1805 (Correspondence between Schiller and Goethe, in the years 1794-1805). 1st-3d Volumes (1794-1797). Stuttgart and Tübingen, 1828-9.

every closed-doors conversation, how trivial soever, has an interest for us; then might the conversation of a Schiller with a Goethe, so rarely do Schillers meet with Goethes among us, tempt Honesty itself into eavesdropping.

Unhappily the conversation flits away forever with the hour that witnessed it; and the Letter and Answer, frank, lively, genial as they may be, are only a poor emblem and epitome of it. The living dramatic movement is gone; nothing but the cold historical net-product remains for us. It is true, in every confidential Letter, the writer will, in some measure, more or less directly depict himself: but nowhere is Painting, by pen or pencil, so inadequate as in delineating Spiritual Nature. The Pyramid can be measured in geometric feet, and the draughtsman represents it, with all its environment, on canvas, accurately to the eye; nay, Mont-Blanc is embossed in coloured stucco; and we have his very type, and miniature fac-simile, in our museums. But for great Men, let him who would know such, pray that he may see them daily face to face: for in the dim distance, and by the eye of the imagination, our vision, do what we may, will be too imperfect. How pale, thin, ineffectual do the great figures we would fain summon from History rise before us! Scarcely as palpable men does our utmost effort body them forth; oftenest only like Ossian's ghosts, in hazy twilight, with 'stars dim twinkling through their forms.' Our Socrates, our Luther, after all that we have talked and argued of them, are to most of us quite invisible; the Sage of Athens, the Monk of Eisleben; not Persons, but Titles. Yet such men, far more than any Alps or Coliseums, are the true world-wonders, which it concerns us to behold clearly, and imprint forever on our remembrance. Great men are the Fire-pillars in this dark pilgrimage of mankind; they stand as heavenly Signs, everliving witnesses of what has been, prophetic tokens of what may still be, the revealed, embodied Possibilities of human nature; which greatness he who has never seen, or rationally conceived of, and with his whole heart passionately loved and reverenced, is himself forever doomed to be little. How many weighty reasons, how many innocent allurements attract our curiosity to such men! We would know them, see them visibly, even as we know and see our like: no hint, no notice that concerns them is superfluous or too small for us. Were Gulliver's Conjurer but here, to recall and sensibly bring back the brave Past, that we might look into it, and scrutinise it at will! But alas, in Nature there is no such

conjuring: the great spirits that have gone before us can survive only as disembodied Voices; their form and distinctive aspect, outward and even in many respects inward, all whereby they were known as living, breathing men, has passed into another sphere; from which only History, in scanty memorials, can evoke some faint resemblance of it. The more precious, in spite of all imperfections, is such History, are such memorials, that still in some degree preserve what had otherwise been lost without recovery.

For the rest, as to the maxim, often enough inculcated on us, that close inspection will abate our admiration, that only the obscure can be sublime, let us put small faith in it. Here, as in other provinces, it is not knowledge, but a little knowledge, that puffeth up, and for wonder at the thing known substitutes mere wonder at the knower thereof: to a sciolist the starry heavens revolving in dead mechanism may be less than a Jacob's vision; but to the Newton they are more; for the same God still dwells enthroned there, and holy Influences, like Angels, still ascend and descend; and this clearer vision of a little but renders the remaining mystery the deeper and more divine. So likewise is it with true spiritual greatness. On the whole, that theory of 'no man being a hero to his valet,' carries us but a little way into the real nature of the case. With a superficial meaning which is plain enough, it essentially holds good only of such heroes as are false, or else of such valets as are too genuine, as are shoulder-knotted and brass-lacquered in soul as well as in body: of other sorts it does not hold. Milton was still a hero to the good Elwood. But we dwell not on that mean doctrine, which, true or false, may be left to itself the more safely, as in practice it is of little or no immediate import. For were it never so true, yet unless we preferred huge bugbears to small realities, our practical course were still the same: to inquire, to investigate by all methods, till we saw clearly.

What worth in this biographical point of view the *Correspondence of Schiller and Goethe* may have, we shall not attempt determining here; the rather as only a portion of the Work, and to judge by the space of time included in it, only a small portion, is yet before us. Nay perhaps its full worth will not become apparent till a future age, when the persons and concerns it treats of shall have assumed their proper relative magnitude, and stand disencumbered, and forever separated from contemporary trivialities, which, for the present, with their hollow transient bulk, so mar our estimate.

Two centuries ago, Leicester and Essex might be the wonders of England; their Kenilworth Festivities and Cadiz Expeditions seemed the great occurrences of that day;—but what would we now give, were these all forgotten, and some 'Correspondence between Shakspeare and Ben Jonson' suddenly brought to light!

One valuable quality these Letters of Schiller and Goethe everywhere exhibit, that of truth: whatever we do learn from them, whether in the shape of fact or of opinion, may be relied on as genuine. There is a tone of entire sincerity in that style: a constant natural courtesy nowhere obstructs the right freedom of word or thought; indeed, no ends but honourable ones, and generally of a mutual interest, are before either party; thus neither needs to veil, still less to mask himself from the other; the two self-portraits, so far as they are filled up, may be looked upon as real likenesses. Perhaps, to most readers, some larger intermixture of what we should call domestic interest, of ordinary human concerns, and the hopes, fears and other feelings these excite, would have improved the Work; which as it is, not indeed without pleasant exceptions, turns mostly on compositions, and publications, and philosophies, and other such high matters. This, we believe, is a rare fault in modern Correspondences; where generally the opposite fault is complained of, and except mere temporalities, good and evil hap of the corresponding parties, their state of purse, heart and nervous system, and the moods and humours these give rise to,—little stands recorded for us. It may be, too, that native readers will feel such a want less than foreigners do, whose curiosity in this instance is equally minute, and to whom so many details, familiar enough in the country itself, must be unknown. At all events, it is to be remembered that Schiller and Goethe are, in strict speech, Literary Men; for whom their social life is only as the dwelling-place and outward tabernacle of their spiritual life; which latter is the one thing needful; the other, except in subserviency to this, meriting no attention, or the least possible. Besides, as cultivated men, perhaps even by natural temper, they are not in the habit of yielding to violent emotions of any kind, still less of unfolding and depicting such, by letter, even to closest intimates; a turn of mind, which, if it diminished the warmth of their epistolary intercourse, must have increased their private happiness, and so by their friends can hardly be regretted. He who wears his heart on his sleeve, will often have to lament aloud that daws peck at it: he who does not, will

spare himself such lamenting. Of Rousseau Confessions, whatever value we assign that sort of ware, there is no vestige in this Correspondence.

Meanwhile, many cheerful, honest little domestic touches are given here and there; which we can accept gladly, with no worse censure than wishing that there had been more. But this Correspondence has another and more proper aspect, under which, if rightly considered, it possesses a far higher interest than most domestic delineations could have imparted. It shows us two high, creative, truly poetic minds, unweariedly cultivating themselves, unweariedly advancing from one measure of strength and clearness to another; whereby to such as travel, we say not on the same road, for this few can do, but in the same direction, as all should do, the richest psychological and practical lesson is laid out; from which men of every intellectual degree may learn something, and he that is of the highest degree will probably learn the most. What value lies in this lesson, moreover, may be expected to increase in an increasing ratio as the Correspondence proceeds, and a larger space, with broader differences of advancement, comes into view; especially as respects Schiller, the younger and more susceptive of the two; for whom, in particular, these eleven years may be said to comprise the most important era of his culture; indeed, the whole history of his progress therein, from the time when he first found the right path, and properly became progressive.

But to enter farther on the merits and special qualities of these Letters, which, on all hands, will be regarded as a publication of real value, both intrinsic and extrinsic, is not our task now. Of the frank, kind, mutually-respectful relation that manifests itself between the two Correspondents; of their several epistolary styles, and the worth of each, and whatever else characterises this Work as a series of biographical documents, or of philosophical views, we may at some future period have occasion to speak: certain detached speculations and indications will of themselves come before us in the course of our present undertaking. Meanwhile, to British readers, the chief object is not the Letters, but the Writers of them. Of Goethe the public already know something: of Schiller less is known, and our wish is to bring him into closer approximation with our readers.

Indeed, had we considered only his importance in German, or we may now say, in European Literature, Schiller might well have demanded an earlier notice in our Journal. As a man of true poetical and philosophical genius, who proved this high endowment

both in his conduct, and by a long series of Writings which manifest it to all; nay, even as a man so eminently admired by his nation, while he lived, and whose fame, there and abroad, during the twenty-five years since his decease, has been constantly expanding and confirming itself, he appears with such claims as can belong only to a small number of men. If we have seemed negligent of Schiller, want of affection was nowise the cause. Our admiration for him is of old standing, and has not abated, as it ripened into calm loving estimation. But to English expositors of Foreign Literature, at this epoch, there will be many more pressing duties than that of expounding Schiller. To a considerable extent, Schiller may be said to expound himself. His greatness is of a simple kind; his manner of displaying it is, for most part, apprehensible to every one. Besides, of all German Writers, ranking in any such class as his, Klopstock scarcely excepted, he has the least nationality: his character indeed is German, if German mean true, earnest, nobly-humane; but his mode of thought, and mode of utterance, all but the mere vocables of it, are European.

Accordingly it is to be observed, no German Writer has had such acceptance with foreigners; has been so instantaneously admitted into favour, at least any favour which proved permanent. Among the French, for example, Schiller is almost naturalised; translated, commented upon, by men of whom Constant is one; even brought upon the stage, and by a large class of critics vehemently extolled there. Indeed, to the Romanticist class, in all countries, Schiller is naturally the pattern man and great master; as it were, a sort of ambassador and mediator, were mediation possible, between the Old School and the New; pointing to his own Works, as to a glittering bridge, that will lead pleasantly from the Versailles gardening and artificial hydraulics of the one, into the true Ginnistan and Wonderland of the other. With ourselves too, who are troubled with no controversies on Romanticism and Classicism,—the Bowles controversy on Pope having long since evaporated without result, and all critical guild-brethren now working diligently, with one accord, in the calmer sphere of Vapidism or even Nullism,—Schiller is no less universally esteemed by persons of any feeling for poetry. To readers of German, and these are increasing everywhere a hundred-fold, he is one of the earliest studies; and the dullest cannot study him without some perception of his beauties. For the Un-German, again, we have Translations in abundance and superabundance; through which, under what-

ever distortion, however shorn of his beams, some image of this poetical sun must force itself; and in susceptive hearts awaken love, and a desire for more immediate insight. So that now, we suppose, anywhere in England, a man who denied that Schiller was a Poet would himself be, from every side, declared a Prosaist, and thereby summarily enough put to silence.

All which being so, the weightiest part of our duty, that of preliminary pleading for Schiller, of asserting rank and excellence for him while a stranger, and to judges suspicious of counterfeits, is taken off our hands. The knowledge of his works is silently and rapidly proceeding; in the only way by which true knowledge can be attained, by loving study of them in many an inquiring, candid mind. Moreover, as remarked above, Schiller's works, generally speaking, require little commentary: for a man of such excellence, for a true Poet, we should say that his worth lies singularly open; nay, in great part of his writings, beyond such open, universally recognisable worth, there is no other to be sought.

Yet doubtless if he is a Poet, a genuine interpreter of the Invisible, Criticism will have a greater duty to discharge for him. Every Poet, be his outward lot what it may, finds himself born in the midst of Prose; he has to struggle from the littleness and obstruction of an Actual world, into the freedom and infinitude of an Ideal; and the history of such struggle, which is the history of his life, cannot be other than instructive. His is a high, laborious, unrequited, or only self-requited endeavour; which, however, by the law of his being, he is compelled to undertake, and must prevail in, or be permanently wretched; nay, the more wretched, the nobler his gifts are. For it is the deep, inborn claim of his whole spiritual nature, and will not and must not go unanswered. His youthful unrest, that 'unrest of genius,' often so wayward in its character, is the dim anticipation of this; the mysterious, all-powerful mandate, as from Heaven, to prepare himself, to purify himself, for the vocation wherewith he is called. And yet how few can fulfil this mandate, how few earnestly give heed to it! Of the thousand jingling dilettanti, whose jingle dies with the hour which it harmlessly or hurtfully amused, we say nothing here: to these, as to the mass of men, such calls for spiritual perfection speak only in whispers, drowned without difficulty in the din and dissipation of the world. But even for the Byron, for the Burns, whose ear is quick for celestial messages, in whom 'speaks the prophesying spirit,' in awful prophetic voice, how hard is it to

'take no counsel with flesh and blood,' and instead of living and writing for the Day that passes over them, live and write for the Eternity that rests and abides over them; instead of living commodiously in the Half, the Reputable, the Plausible, 'to live resolutely in the Whole, the Good, the True!'[2] Such Halfness, such halting between two opinions, such painful, altogether fruitless negotiating between Truth and Falsehood, has been the besetting sin, and chief misery, of mankind in all ages. Nay in our age, it has christened itself Moderation, a prudent taking of the middle course; and passes current among us as a virtue. How virtuous it is, the withered condition of many a once ingenuous nature that has lived by this method; the broken or breaking heart of many a noble nature that could not live by it,—speak aloud, did we but listen.

And now when, from among so many shipwrecks and misventures, one goodly vessel comes to land, we joyfully survey its rich cargo, and hasten to question the crew on the fortunes of their voyage. Among the crowd of uncultivated and miscultivated writers, the high, pure Schiller stands before us with a like distinction. We ask: How was this man successful? from what peculiar point of view did he attempt penetrating the secret of spiritual Nature? From what region of Prose rise into Poetry? Under what outward accidents; with what inward faculties; by what methods; with what result?

For any thorough or final answer to such questions, it is evident enough, neither our own means, nor the present situation of our readers in regard to this matter, are in any measure adequate. Nevertheless, the imperfect beginning must be made before the perfect result can appear. Some slight far-off glance over the character of the man, as he looked and lived, in Action and in Poetry, will not, perhaps, be unacceptable from us: for such as know little of Schiller, it may be an opening of the way to better knowledge; for such as are already familiar with him, it may be a stating in words of what they themselves have often thought, and welcome, therefore, as the confirming testimony of a second witness.

Of Schiller's personal history there are accounts in various accessible publications; so that, we suppose, no formal Narrative of his Life, which may now be considered generally known, is necessary here. Such as are curious on the subject, and still uninformed, may find some satisfaction in the *Life of Schiller* (London, 1825); in the *Vie de Schiller*, prefixed to the French

[2] *Im Ganzen, Guten, Wahren resolut zu leben.* Goethe.

Translation of his Dramatic Works; in the *Account of Schiller*, prefixed to the English Translation of his Thirty-Years War (Edinburgh, 1828); and, doubtless, in many other Essays, known to us only by title. Nay in the survey we propose to make of his character, practical as well as speculative, the main facts of his outward history will of themselves come to light.

Schiller's Life is emphatically a literary one; that of a man existing only for Contemplation; guided forward by the pursuit of ideal things, and seeking and finding his true welfare therein. A singular simplicity characterises it, a remoteness from whatever is called business; an aversion to the tumults of business, an indifference to its prizes, grows with him from year to year. He holds no office; scarcely for a little while a University Professorship; he covets no promotion; has no stock of money; and shows no discontent with these arrangements. Nay when permanent sickness, continual pain of body, is added to them, he still seems happy: these last fifteen years of his life are, spiritually considered, the clearest and most productive of all. We might say, there is something priest-like in that Life of his: under quite another colour and environment, yet with aims differing in form rather than in essence, it has a priest-like stillness, a priest-like purity; nay, if for the Catholic Faith we substitute the Ideal of Art, and for Convent Rules, Moral or Æsthetic Laws, it has even something of a monastic character. By the three monastic vows he was not bound: yet vows of as high and difficult a kind, both to do and to forbear, he had taken on him; and his happiness and whole business lay in observing them. Thus immured, not in cloisters of stone and mortar, yet in cloisters of the mind, which separate him as impassably from the vulgar, he works and meditates only on what we may call Divine things; his familiar talk, his very recreations, the whole actings and fancyings of his daily existence, tend thither.

As in the life of a Holy Man too, so in that of Schiller, there is but one great epoch: that of taking on him these Literary Vows; of finally extricating himself from the distractions of the world, and consecrating his whole future days to Wisdom. What lies before this epoch, and what lies after it, have two altogether different characters. The former is worldly, and occupied with worldly vicissitudes; the latter is spiritual, of calm tenour; marked to himself only by his growth in inward clearness, to the world

only by the peaceable fruits of this. It is to the first of these periods that we shall here chiefly direct ourselves.

In his parentage, and the circumstances of his earlier years, we may reckon him fortunate. His parents, indeed, are not rich, nor even otherwise independent: yet neither are they meanly poor; and warm affection, a true honest character, ripened in both into religion, not without an openness for knowledge, and even considerable intellectual culture, makes amends for every defect. The Boy, too, is himself of a character in which, to the observant, lies the richest promise. A modest, still nature, apt for all instruction in heart or head; flashes of liveliness, of impetuosity, from time to time breaking through. That little anecdote of the Thunder-storm is so graceful in its littleness, that one cannot but hope it may be authentic.

'Once, it is said, during a tremendous thunder-storm, his father missed him in the young group within doors; none of the sisters could tell what was become of Fritz, and the old man grew at length so anxious that he was forced to go out in quest of him. Fritz was scarcely past the age of infancy, and knew not the dangers of a scene so awful. His father found him at last, in a solitary place in the neighbourhood, perched on the branch of a tree, gazing at the tempestuous face of the sky, and watching the flashes as in succession they spread their lurid gleam over it. To the reprimands of his parent, the whimpering truant pleaded in extenuation, "that the Lightning was so beautiful, and he wished to see where it was coming from!"'

In his village-school he reads the Classics with diligence, without relish; at home, with far deeper feelings, the Bible; and already his young heart is caught with that mystic grandeur of the Hebrew Prophets. His devout nature, moulded by the pious habits of his parents, inclines him to be a clergyman: a clergyman, indeed, he proved; only the Church he ministered in was the Catholic, a far more Catholic than that false Romish one. But already in his ninth year, not without rapturous amazement, and a lasting remembrance, he had seen the 'splendours of the Ludwigsburg Theatre;' and so, unconsciously, cast a glimpse into that world, where, by accident or natural preference, his own genius was one day to work out its noblest triumphs.

Before the end of his boyhood, however, begins a far harsher era for Schiller; wherein, under quite other nurture, other faculties

were to be developed in him. He must enter on a scene of oppression, distortion, isolation; under which, for the present, the fairest years of his existence are painfully crushed down. But this too has its wholesome influences on him; for there is in genius that alchemy which converts all metals into gold; which from suffering educes strength, from error clearer wisdom, from all things good.

'The Duke of Würtemberg had lately founded a free seminary for certain branches of professional education: it was first set up at Solitude, one of his country residences; and had now been transferred to Stuttgard, where, under an improved form, and with the name of *Karls-schule*, we believe it still exists. The Duke proposed to give the sons of his military officers a preferable claim to the benefits of this institution; and having formed a good opinion both of Schiller and his father, he invited the former to profit by this opportunity. The offer occasioned great embarrassment: the young man and his parents were alike determined in favour of the Church, a project with which this new one was inconsistent. Their embarrassment was but increased when the Duke, on learning the nature of their scruples, desired them to think well before they decided. It was out of fear, and with reluctance, that his proposal was accepted. Schiller enrolled himself in 1773; and turned, with a heavy heart, from freedom and cherished hopes, to Greek, and seclusion, and Law.

'His anticipations proved to be but too just: the six years which he spent in this Establishment were the most harassing and comfortless of his life. The Stuttgard system of education seems to have been formed on the principle, not of cherishing and correcting nature, but of rooting it out, and supplying its place by something better. The process of teaching and living was conducted with the stiff formality of military drilling; everything went on by statute and ordinance; there was no scope for the exercise of free-will, no allowance for the varieties of original structure. A scholar might possess what instincts or capacities he pleased; the "regulations of the school" took no account of this; he must fit himself into the common mould, which, like the old Giant's bed, stood there, appointed by superior authority, to be filled alike by the great and the little. The same strict and narrow course of reading and composition was marked out for each beforehand, and it was by stealth if he read or wrote anything beside. Their domestic economy was regulated in the same spirit as their preceptorial: it consisted of the same sedulous exclusion of all that could border on pleasure, or give any exercise to choice. The pupils were kept apart from the conversation or sight of any person but their teachers; none ever got beyond the precincts of despotism to snatch even a fearful joy; their very amusements proceeded by the word of command.

'How grievous all this must have been it is easy to conceive. To Schiller it was more grievous than to any other. Of an ardent and impetuous yet delicate nature, whilst his discontentment devoured him internally, he was too modest to give it the relief of utterance by deeds or words. Locked up within himself, he suffered deeply, but without complaining. Some of his Letters written during this period have been preserved: they exhibit the ineffectual struggles of a fervid and busy mind veiling its many chagrins under a certain dreary patience, which only shows them more painfully. He pored over his lexicons, and grammars, and insipid tasks, with an artificial composure; but his spirit pined within him like a captive's when he looked forth into the cheerful world, or recollected the affection of parents, the hopes and frolicsome enjoyments of past years.'

Youth is to all the glad season of life; but often only by what it hopes, not by what it attains, or what it escapes. In these sufferings of Schiller's many a one may say, there is nothing unexampled: could not the history of every Eton Scholar, of every poor Midshipman, with his rudely-broken domestic ties, his privations, persecutions and cheerless solitude of heart, equal or outdo them? In respect of these its palpable hardships perhaps it might; and be still very miserable. But the hardship which presses heaviest on Schiller lies deeper than all these; out of which the natural fire of almost any young heart will, sooner or later, rise victorious. His worst oppression is an oppression of the moral sense; a fettering not of the Desires only, but of the pure reasonable Will: for besides all outward sufferings, his mind is driven from its true aim, dimly yet invincibly felt to be the true one; and turned, by sheer violence, into one which it feels to be false. Not in Law, with its profits and dignities; not in Medicine, which he willingly, yet still hopelessly exchanges for Law; not in the routine of any marketable occupation, how gainful or honoured soever, can his soul find content and a home: only in some far purer and higher region of Activity; for which he has yet no name; which he once fancied to be the Church, which at length he discovers to be Poetry. Nor is this any transient boyish wilfulness, but a deep-seated, earnest, ineradicable longing, the dim purpose of his whole inner man. Nevertheless as a transient boyish wilfulness his teachers must regard it, and deal with it; and not till after the fiercest contest, and a clear victory, will its true nature be recognised. Herein lay the sharpest sting of Schiller's ill-fortune; his whole mind is wrenched asunder; he has

no rallying point in his misery; he is suffering and toiling for a wrong object. 'A singular miscalculation of Nature,' he says, long afterwards, 'had combined my poetical tendencies with the place 'of my birth. Any disposition to Poetry did violence to the laws 'of the Institution where I was educated, and contradicted the 'plan of its founder. For eight years my enthusiasm struggled 'with military discipline; but the passion for Poetry is vehement 'and fiery as a first love. What discipline was meant to ex-'tinguish, it blew into a flame. To escape from arrangements 'that tortured me, my heart sought refuge in the world of ideas, 'when as yet I was unacquainted with the world of realities, from 'which iron bars excluded me.'

Doubtless Schiller's own prudence had already taught him that in order to live poetically, it was first requisite to live; that he should and must, as himself expresses it, 'forsake the balmy 'climate of Pindus for the Greenland of a barren and dreary 'science of terms.' But the dull work of this Greenland once accomplished, he might rationally hope that his task was done; that the 'leisure gained by superior diligence' would be his own, for Poetry, or whatever else he pleased. Truly, it was 'intolerable 'and degrading to be hemmed-in still farther by the caprices of 'severe and formal pedagogues.' No wonder that Schiller 'brooded gloomily' over his situation. But what was to be done? 'Many 'plans he formed for deliverance: sometimes he would escape in 'secret to catch a glimpse of the free and busy world, to him 'forbidden: sometimes he laid schemes for utterly abandoning a 'place which he abhorred, and trusting to fortune for the rest.' But he is young, inexperienced, unprovided; without help or counsel: there is nothing to be done but endure.

'Under such corroding and continual vexations,' says his Biographer, 'an ordinary spirit would have sunk at length; would have gradually given up its loftier aspirations, and sought refuge in vicious indulgence, or at best have sullenly harnessed itself into the yoke, and plodded through existence; weary, discontented and broken, ever casting back a hankering look on the dreams of his youth, and ever without power to realise them. But Schiller was no ordinary character, and did not act like one. Beneath a cold and simple exterior, dignified with no artificial attractions, and marred in its native amiableness by the incessant obstruction, the isolation and painful destitutions under which he lived, there was concealed a burning energy of soul, which no obstruction could extinguish. The hard circumstances of his fortune had prevented the

natural development of his mind; his faculties had been cramped and misdirected; but they had gathered strength by opposition and the habit of self-dependence which it encouraged. His thoughts, unguided by a teacher, had sounded into the depths of his own nature and the mysteries of his own fate; his feelings and passions, unshared by any other heart, had been driven back upon his own; where, like the volcanic fire that smoulders and fuses in secret, they accumulated till their force grew irresistible.

'Hitherto Schiller had passed for an unprofitable, a discontented and a disobedient Boy: but the time was now come when the gyves of school-discipline could no longer cripple and distort the giant might of his nature: he stood forth as a Man, and wrenched asunder his fetters with a force that was felt at the extremities of Europe. The publication of the *Robbers* forms an era not only in Schiller's history, but in the literature of the World; and there seems no doubt that, but for so mean a cause as the perverted discipline of the Stuttgard school, we had never seen this tragedy. Schiller commenced it in his nineteenth year; and the circumstances under which it was composed are to be traced in all its parts.

'Translations of the work soon appeared in almost all the languages of Europe,[3] and were read in almost all of them with a deep interest, compounded of admiration and aversion, according to the relative proportions of sensibility and judgment in the various minds which contemplated the subject. In Germany, the enthusiasm which the *Robbers* excited was extreme. The young author had burst upon the world like a meteor; and surprise, for a time, suspended the power of cool and rational criticism. In the ferment produced by the univeral discussion of this single topic, the poet was magnified above his natural dimensions, great as they were: and though the general sentence was loudly in his favour, yet he found detractors as well as praisers, and both equally beyond the limits of moderation.

'But the tragedy of the *Robbers* produced for its Author some consequences of a kind much more sensible than these. We have called it the signal of Schiller's deliverance from school-tyranny and military constraint; but its operation in this respect was not immediate. At first it seemed to involve him more deeply than before. He had finished the original sketch of it in 1778; but for fear of offence, he kept it secret till his medical studies were completed. These, in the mean time, he

[3] Our English translation, one of the washiest, was executed (we have been told) in Edinburgh by a 'Lord of Session,' otherwise not unknown in Literature; who went to work under deepest concealment, lest evil might befall him. The confidential Devil, now an Angel, who mysteriously carried him the proof-sheets, is our informant.

had pursued with sufficient assiduity to merit the usual honours. In 1780, he had, in consequence, obtained the post of Surgeon to the regiment *Augé* in the Würtemberg army. This advancement enabled him to complete his project,—to print the *Robbers* at his own expense; not being able to find any bookseller that would undertake it. The nature of the work, and the universal interest it awakened, drew attention to the private circumstances of the Author, whom the *Robbers*, as well as other pieces of his writing that had found their way into the periodical publications of the time, sufficiently showed to be no common man. Many grave persons were offended at the vehement sentiments expressed in the *Robbers;* and the unquestioned ability with which these extravagances were expressed but made the matter worse. To Schiller's superiors, above all, such things were inconceivable; he might perhaps be a very great genius, but was certainly a dangerous servant for His Highness, the Grand Duke of Würtemberg. Officious people mingled themselves in the affair: nay the graziers of the Alps were brought to bear upon it. The Grisons magistrates, it appeared, had seen the book, and were mortally huffed at their people's being there spoken of, according to a Swabian adage, as *common highwaymen.*[4] They complained in the *Hamburg Correspondent;* and a sort of jackal at Ludwigsburg, one Walter, whose name deserves to be thus kept in mind, volunteered to plead their cause before the Grand Duke.

'Informed of all these circumstances, the Grand Duke expressed his disapprobation of Schiller's poetical labours in the most unequivocal terms. Schiller was at length summoned before him; and it then turned out, that His Highness was not only dissatisfied with the moral or political errors of the work, but scandalised moreover at its want of literary merit. In this latter respect he was kind enough to proffer his own services. But Schiller seems to have received the proposal with no sufficient gratitude; and the interview passed without advantage to either party. It terminated in the Duke's commanding Schiller to abide by medical subjects: or at least, to beware of writing any more poetry, without submitting it to *his* inspection.

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'Various new mortifications awaited Schiller. It was in vain that

[4] The obnoxious passage has been carefully expunged from subsequent editions. It was in the third Scene of the second Act. Spiegelberg, discoursing with Razmann, observes, "An honest man you may form of windle-straws; but to make a rascal you must have grist: besides, there is a national genius in it,—a certain rascal-climate, so to speak." In the first Edition there was added, "*Go to the Grisons, for instance; that is what I call the Thief's Athens.*" The patriot who stood forth, on this occasion, for the honour of the Grisons, to deny this weighty charge, and denounce the crime of making it, was not Dogberry or Verges, but 'one of the noble family of Salis.'

he discharged the humble duties of his station with the most strict fidelity, and even, it is said, with superior skill: he was a suspected person, and his most innocent actions were misconstrued, his slightest faults were visited with the full measure of official severity. * * *

'His free spirit shrank at the prospect of wasting its strength in strife against the pitiful constraints, the minute and endless persecutions of men who knew him not, yet had his fortune in their hands: the idea of dungeons and jailors haunted and tortured his mind; and the means of escaping them, the renunciation of poetry, the source of all his joy, if likewise of many woes, the radiant guiding-star of his turbid and obscure existence, seemed a sentence of death to all that was dignified, and delightful, and worth retaining in his character. * * *

'With the natural feeling of a young author, he had ventured to go in secret, and witness the first representation of his Tragedy at Mannheim. His incognito did not conceal him; he was put under arrest, during a week, for this offence: and as the punishment did not deter him from again transgressing in a similar manner, he learned that it was in contemplation to try more rigorous measures with him. Dark hints were given to him of some exemplary as well as imminent severity: and Dalberg's aid, the sole hope of averting it by quiet means, was distant and dubious. Schiller saw himself reduced to extremities. Beleaguered with present distresses, and the most horrible forebodings, on every side; roused to the highest pitch of indignation, yet forced to keep silence and wear the face of patience, he could endure this maddening constraint no longer. He resolved to be free, at whatever risk; to abandon advantages which he could not buy at such a price; to quit his step-dame home, and go forth, though friendless and alone, to seek his fortune in the great market of life. Some foreign Duke or Prince was arriving at Stuttgard; and all the people were in movement, witnessing the spectacle of his entrance: Schiller seized this opportunity of retiring from the city, careless whither he went, so he got beyond the reach of turnkeys, and Grand Dukes, and commanding officers. It was in the month of October 1782, his twenty-third year.'[5]

Such were the circumstances under which Schiller rose to manhood. We see them permanently influence his character; but there is also a strength in himself which on the whole triumphs over them. The kindly and the unkindly alike lead him towards the goal. In childhood, the most unheeded, but by far the most important era of existence,—as it were, the still Creation-days of the whole future man,—he had breathed the only wholesome atmosphere, a soft atmosphere of affection and joy: the invisible seeds

[5] *Life of Schiller*, Part I.

which are one day to ripen into clear Devoutness, and all humane Virtue, are happily sown in him. Not till he has gathered force for resistance, does the time of contradiction, of being 'purified by suffering,' arrive. For this contradiction too we have to thank those Stuttgard Schoolmasters and their purblind Duke. Had the system they followed been a milder, more reasonable one, we should not indeed have altogether lost our Poet, for the Poetry lay in his inmost soul, and could not remain unuttered; but we might well have found him under a far inferior character: not dependent on himself and truth, but dependent on the world and its gifts; not standing on a native, everlasting basis, but on an accidental, transient one.

In Schiller himself, as manifested in these emergencies, we already trace the chief features which distinguish him through life. A tenderness, a sensitive delicacy, aggravated under that harsh treatment, issues in a certain shyness and reserve: which, as conjoined moreover with habits of internal and not of external activity, might in time have worked itself, had his natural temper been less warm and affectionate, into timorous self-seclusion, dissociality and even positive misanthropy. Nay generally viewed, there is much in Schiller at this epoch that to a careless observer might have passed for weakness; as indeed, for such observers, weakness and fineness of nature are easily confounded. One element of strength, however, and the root of all strength, he throughout evinces: he wills one thing, and knows what he wills. His mind has a purpose, and still better, a right purpose. He already loves true spiritual Beauty with his whole heart and his whole soul; and for the attainment, for the pursuit of this, is prepared to make all sacrifices. As a dim instinct, under vague forms, this aim first appears; gains force with his force, clearness in the opposition it must conquer; and at length declares itself, with a peremptory emphasis which will admit of no contradiction.

As a mere piece of literary history, these passages of Schiller's life are not without interest: this is a 'persecution for conscience-sake,' such as has oftener befallen heresy in Religion than heresy in Literature; a blind struggle to extinguish, by physical violence, the inward celestial light of a human soul; and here in regard to Literature, as in regard to Religion it always is, an ineffectual struggle. Doubtless, as religious Inquisitors have often done, those secular Inquisitors meant honestly in persecuting; and since the matter went well in spite of them, their interference with it may be forgiven and forgotten. We have dwelt the longer on these

proceedings of theirs, because they bring us to the grand crisis of Schiller's history, and for the first time show us his will decisively asserting itself, decisively pronouncing the law whereby his whole future life is to be governed. He himself says, he 'went empty away; empty in purse and hope.' Yet the mind that dwelt in him was still there with its gifts; and the task of his existence now lay undivided before him. He is henceforth a Literary Man; and need appear in no other character. 'All my connexions,' he could ere long say, 'are now dissolved. The public is now all to me; my study, 'my sovereign, my confidant. To the public alone I from this time 'belong; before this and no other tribunal will I place myself; 'this alone do I reverence and fear. Something majestic hovers 'before me, as I determine now to wear no other fetters but the 'sentence of the world, to appeal to no other throne but the soul 'of man.'[6]

In his subsequent life, with all varieties of outward fortune, we find a noble inward unity. That love of Literature, and that resolution to abide by it at all hazards, do not forsake him. He wanders through the world; looks at it under many phases; mingles in the joys of social life; is a husband, father; experiences all the common destinies of man; but the same 'radiant guiding-star' which, often obscured, had led him safe through the perplexities of his youth, now shines on him with unwavering light. In all relations and conditions Schiller is blameless, amiable; he is even little tempted to err. That high purpose after spiritual perfection, which with him was a love of Poetry, and an unwearied active love, is itself, when pure and supreme, the necessary parent of good conduct, as of noble feeling. With all men it should be pure and supreme, for in one or the other shape it is the true end of man's life. Neither in any man is it ever wholly obliterated; with the most, however, it remains a passive sentiment, an idle wish. And even with the small residue of men, in whom it attains some measure of activity, who would be Poets in act or word, how seldom is it the sincere and highest purpose, how seldom unmixed with vulgar ambition, and low, mere earthly aims, which distort or utterly pervert its manifestations! With Schiller, again, it was the one thing needful; the first duty, for which all other duties worked together, under which all other duties quietly prospered, as under their rightful sovereign. Worldly preferment, fame itself, he did not covet: yet of fame he reaps the most plenteous harvest;

[6] Preface to the *Thalia*.

and of worldly goods what little he wanted is in the end made sure to him. His mild, honest character everywhere gains him friends: that upright, peaceful, simple life is honourable in the eyes of all; and they who know him the best love him the most.

Perhaps among all the circumstances of Schiller's literary life, there was none so important for him as his connexion with Goethe. To use our old figure, we might say, that if Schiller was a Priest, then was Goethe the Bishop from whom he first acquired clear spiritual light, by whose hands he was ordained to the priesthood. Their friendship has been much celebrated, and deserved to be so: it is a pure relation; unhappily too rare in Literature; where if a Swift and Pope can even found an imperious Duumvirate, on little more than mutually-tolerated pride, and part the spoils for some time without quarrelling, it is thought a credit. Seldom do men combine so steadily and warmly for such purposes, which when weighed in the economic balance are but gossamer. It appears also that preliminary difficulties stood in the way; prepossessions of some strength had to be conquered on both sides. For a number of years, the two, by accident or choice, never met, and their first interview scarcely promised any permanent approximation. 'On the whole,' says Schiller, 'this personal meeting has 'not at all diminished the idea, great as it was, which I had pre-'viously formed of Goethe; but I doubt whether we shall ever 'come into close communication with each other. Much that still 'interests me has already had its epoch with him. His whole 'nature is, from its very origin, otherwise constructed than mine; 'his world is not my world; our modes of conceiving things appear 'to be essentially different. From such a combination no secure 'substantial intimacy can result.'

Nevertheless, in spite of far graver prejudices on the part of Goethe,—to say nothing of the poor jealousies which in another man so circumstanced would openly or secretly have been at work, —a secure substantial intimacy did result; manifesting itself by continual good offices, and interrupted only by death. If we regard the relative situation of the parties, and their conduct in this matter, we must recognise in both of them no little social virtue; at all events, a deep disinterested love of worth. In the case of Goethe, more especially, who, as the elder and everyway greater of the two, has little to expect in comparison with what he gives, this friendly union, had we space to explain its nature and progress, would give new proof that, as poor Jung Stilling

also experienced, 'the man's heart, which few know, is as true 'and noble as his genius, which all know.'

By Goethe, and this even before the date of their friendship, Schiller's outward interests had been essentially promoted: he was introduced, under that sanction, into the service of Weimar, to an academic office, to a pension; his whole way was made smooth for him. In spiritual matters, this help, or rather let us say coöperation, for it came not in the shape of help, but of reciprocal service, was of still more lasting consequence. By the side of his friend, Schiller rises into the highest regions of Art he ever reached; and in all worthy things is sure of sympathy, of one wise judgment amid a crowd of unwise ones, of one helpful hand amid many hostile. Thus outwardly and inwardly assisted and confirmed, he henceforth goes on his way with new steadfastness, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left; and while days are given him, devotes them wholly to his best duty. It is rare that one man can do so much for another, can permanently benefit another; so mournfully, in giving and receiving, as in most charitable affections and finer movements of our nature, are we all held-in by that paltry vanity which, under reputable names, usurps, on both sides, a sovereignty it has no claim to. Nay many times, when our friend would honestly help us, and strives to do it, yet will he never bring himself to understand what we really need, and so to forward us on our own path; but insists more simply on our taking his path, and leaves us as incorrigible because we will not and cannot. Thus men are solitary among each other; no one will help his neighbour; each has even to assume a defensive attitude lest his neighbour hinder him!

Of Schiller's zealous, entire devotedness to Literature we have already spoken as of his crowning virtue, and the great source of his welfare. With what ardour he pursued this object, his whole life, from the earliest stage of it, had given proof: but the clearest proof, clearer even than that youthful self-exile, was reserved for his later years, when a lingering, incurable disease had laid on him its new and ever-galling burden. At no period of Schiller's history does the native nobleness of his character appear so decidedly as now in this season of silent unwitnessed heroism, when the dark enemy dwelt within himself, unconquerable, yet ever, in all other struggles, to be kept at bay. We have medical evidence that during the last fifteen years of his life, not a moment could have been free of pain. Yet he utters no complaint. In this 'Corre-

spondence with Goethe' we see him cheerful, laborious; scarcely speaking of his maladies, and then only historically, in the style of a third party, as it were, calculating what force and length of days might still remain at his disposal. Nay his highest poetical performances, we may say all that are truly poetical, belong to this era. If we recollect how many poor valetudinarians, Rousseaus, Cowpers and the like, men otherwise of fine endowments, dwindle under the influence of nervous disease into pining wretchedness, some into madness itself; and then that Schiller, under the like influence, wrote some of his deepest speculations, and all his genuine dramas, from *Wallenstein* to *Wilhelm Tell*, we shall the better estimate his merit.

It has been said, that only in Religion, or something equivalent to Religion, can human nature support itself under such trials. But Schiller too had his Religion; was a Worshipper, nay, as we have often said, a Priest; and so in his earthly sufferings wanted not a heavenly stay. Without some such stay his life might well have been intolerable; stript of the Ideal, what remained for him in the Real was but a poor matter. Do we talk of his 'happiness'? Alas, what is the loftiest flight of genius, the finest frenzy that ever for moments united Heaven with Earth, to the perennial never-failing joys of a digestive-apparatus thoroughly eupeptic? Has not the turtle-eating man an eternal sunshine of the breast? Does not his Soul,—which, as in some Sclavonic dialects, means his Stomach,—sit forever at its ease, enwrapped in warm condiments, amid spicy odours; enjoying the past, the present and the future; and only awakening from its soft trance to the sober certainty of a still higher bliss each meal-time,—three, or even four visions of Heaven in the space of one solar day! While for the sick man of genius, 'whose world is of the mind, ideal, internal; 'when the mildew of lingering disease has struck that world, and 'begun to blacken and consume its beauty, what remains but 'despondency, and bitterness, and desolate sorrow felt and antici-'pated to the end?'

'Woe to him,' continues this Jeremiah, 'if his will likewise falter, if his resolution fail, and his spirit bend its neck to the yoke of this new enemy! Idleness and a disturbed imagination will gain the mastery of him, and let loose their thousand fiends to harass him, to torment him into madness. Alas, the bondage of Algiers is freedom compared with this of the sick man of genius, whose heart has fainted, and sunk beneath

its load. His clay dwelling is changed into a gloomy prison; every nerve has become an avenue of disgust or anguish, and the soul sits within in her melancholy loneliness, a prey to the spectres of despair, or stupefied with excess of suffering; doomed as it were to a life-in-death, to a consciousness of agonised existence, without the consciousness of power which should accompany it. Happily death, or entire fatuity, at length puts an end to such scenes of ignoble misery, which, however, ignoble as they are, we ought to view with pity rather than contempt."[1]

Yet on the whole, we say, it is a shame for the man of genius to complain. Has he not a 'light from Heaven' within him, to which the splendour of all earthly thrones and principalities is but darkness? And the head that wears such a crown grudges to lie uneasy? If that same 'light from Heaven,' shining through the falsest media, supported Syrian Simon through all weather on his sixty-feet Pillar, or the still more wonderful Eremite who walled himself, for life, up to the chin, in stone and mortar; how much more should it do, when shining direct, and pure from all intermixture? Let the modern Priest of Wisdom either suffer his small persecutions and inflictions, though sickness be of the number, in patience, or admit that ancient fanatics and bedlamites were truer worshippers than he.

A foolish controversy on this subject of Happiness now and then occupies some intellectual dinner-party; speculative gentlemen we have seen more than once almost forget their wine in arguing whether Happiness was the chief end of man. The most cry out, with Pope: 'Happiness, our being's end and aim;' and ask whether it is even conceivable that we should follow any other. How comes it, then, cry the Opposition, that the gross are happier than the refined; that even though we know them to be happier, we would not change places with them? Is it not written, Increase of knowledge is increase of sorrow? And yet also written, in characters still more ineffaceable, Pursue knowledge, attain clear vision, as the beginning of all good? Were your doctrine right, for what should we struggle with our whole might, for what pray to Heaven, if not that the 'malady of thought' might be utterly stifled within us, and a power of digestion and secretion, to which that of the tiger were trifling, be imparted instead thereof? Whereupon the others deny that thought is a malady; that increase of knowledge is increase of sorrow; that Aldermen have a

[1] *Life of Schiller*, p. 85.

sunnier life than Aristotle's, though the Stagyrite himself died exclaiming, *Fœde mundum intravi, anxius vixi, perturbatus morior;* &c. &c.: and thus the argument circulates, and the bottles stand still.

So far as that Happiness-question concerns the symposia of speculative gentlemen,—the rather as it really is a good enduring hacklog whereon to chop logic, for those so minded,—we with great willingness leave it resting on its own bottom. But there are earnest natures for whom Truth is no plaything, but the staff of life; men whom the 'solid reality of things' will not carry forward; who, when the 'inward voice' is silent in them, are powerless, nor will the loud huzzaing of millions supply the want of it. To these men, seeking anxiously for guidance; feeling that did they once clearly see the right, they would follow it cheerfully to weal or to woe, comparatively careless which; to these men the question, what is the proper aim of man, has a deep and awful interest.

For the sake of such, it may be remarked that the origin of this argument, like that of every other argument under the sun, lies in the confusion of language. If Happiness mean Welfare, there is no doubt but all men should and must pursue their Welfare, that is to say, pursue what is worthy of their pursuit. But if, on the other hand, Happiness mean, as for most men it does, 'agreeable sensations,' Enjoyment refined or not, then must we observe that there *is* a doubt; or rather that there is a certainty the other way. Strictly considered, this truth, that man has in him something higher than a Love of Pleasure, take Pleasure in what sense you will, has been the text of all true Teachers and Preachers, since the beginning of the world; and in one or another dialect, we may hope, will continue to be preached and taught till the world end. Neither is our own day without its assertors thereof: what, for example, does the astonished reader make of this little sentence from Schiller's *Æsthetic Letters*? It is on that old question, the 'improvement of the species;' which, however, is handled here in a very new manner:

'The first acquisitions, then, which men gathered in the Kingdom of Spirit were *Anxiety* and *Fear;* both, it is true, products of Reason, not of Sense; but of a Reason that mistook its object, and mistook its mode of application. Fruits of this same tree are all your Happiness-Systems (*Glückseligkeitssysteme*), whether they have for object the passing day, or

the whole of life, or what renders them no whit more venerable, the whole of Eternity. A boundless duration of Being and Well-being (*Daseyns und Wohlseyns*) simply for Being and Well-being's sake, is an Ideal belonging to Appetite alone, and which only the struggle of mere Animalism (*Thierheit*), longing to be infinite, gives rise to. Thus without gaining anything for his Manhood, he, by this first effort of Reason, loses the happy limitation of the Animal; and has now only the unenviable superiority of missing the Present in an effort directed to the Distance, and whereby still, in the whole boundless Distance, nothing but the Present is sought for.'[8]

The *Æsthetic Letters*, in which this and many far deeper matters come into view, will one day deserve a long chapter to themselves. Meanwhile we cannot but remark, as a curious symptom of this time, that the pursuit of merely sensuous good, of personal Pleasure, in one shape or other, should be the universally admitted formula of man's whole duty. Once, Epicurus had his Zeno; and if the herd of mankind have at all times been the slaves of Desire, drudging anxiously for their mess of pottage, or filling themselves with swine's husks,—earnest natures were not wanting who, at least in theory, asserted for their kind a higher vocation than this; declaring, as they could, that man's soul was no dead Balance for 'motives' to sway hither and thither, but a living, divine Soul, indefeasibly free, whose birthright it was to be the servant of Virtue, Goodness, God, and in such service to be blessed without fee or reward. Nowadays, however, matters are, on all hands, managed far more prudently. The choice of Hercules could not occasion much difficulty, in these times, to any young man of talent. On the one hand,—by a path which is steep, indeed, yet smoothed by much travelling, and kept in constant repair by many a moral Macadam,—smokes (in patent calefactors) a Dinner of innumerable courses; on the other, by a downward path, through avenues of very mixed character, frowns in the distance a grim Gallows, probably with 'improved drop.' Thus is Utility the only God of these days; and our honest Benthamites are but a small Provincial Synod of that boundless Communion. Without gift of prophecy we may predict, that the straggling bush-fire which is kept up here and there against that body of well-intentioned men, must one day become a universal battle; and the grand question, Mind *versus* Matter, be again under new forms judged of and decided.—

[8] *Briefe über die æsthetische Erziehung des Menschen*, b. 24.

But we wander too far from our task; to which, therefore, nothing doubtful of a prosperous issue in due time to that Utilitarian struggle, we hasten to return.

In forming for ourselves some picture of Schiller as a man, of what may be called his moral character, perhaps the very perfection of his manner of existence tends to diminish our estimate of its merits. What he aimed at he has attained in a singular degree. His life, at least from the period of manhood, is still, unruffled; of clear, even course. The completeness of the victory hides from us the magnitude of the struggle. On the whole, however, we may admit, that his character was not so much a great character as a holy one. We have often named him a Priest; and this title, with the quiet loftiness, the pure, secluded, only internal, yet still heavenly worth that should belong to it, perhaps best describes him. One high enthusiasm takes possession of his whole nature. Herein lies his strength, as well as the task he has to do; for this he lived, and we may say also he died for it. In his life we see not that the social affections played any deep part. As a son, husband, father, friend, he is ever kindly, honest, amiable; but rarely, if at all, do outward things stimulate him into what can be called passion. Of the wild loves and lamentations, and all the fierce ardour that distinguish, for instance, his Scottish contemporary Burns, there is scarcely any trace here. It fact, it was towards the Ideal, not towards the Actual, that Schiller's faith and hope was directed. His highest happiness lay not in outward honour, pleasure, social recreation, perhaps not even in friendly affection, such as the world could show it; but in the realm of Poetry, a city of the mind, where, for him, all that was true and noble had foundation. His habits, accordingly, though far from dissocial, were solitary; his chief business and chief pleasure lay in silent meditation.

'His intolerance of interruptions,' we are told, at an early period of his life, 'first put him on the plan of studying by night; an alluring, but pernicious practice, which began at Dresden, and was never afterwards given up. His recreations breathed a similar spirit: he loved to be much alone, and strongly moved. The banks of the Elbe were the favourite resort of his mornings: here, wandering in solitude, amid groves and lawns, and green and beautiful places, he abandoned his mind to delicious musings; or meditated on the cares and studies which had lately been employing, and were again soon to employ him. At times he might be seen floating on the river, in a gondola, feasting himself

with the loveliness of earth and sky. He delighted most to be there when tempests were abroad; his unquiet spirit found a solace in the expression of its own unrest on the face of Nature; danger lent a charm to his situation; he felt in harmony with the scene, when the rack was sweeping stormfully across the heavens, and the forests were sounding in the breeze, and the river was rolling its chafed waters into wild eddying heaps.'

'During summer,' it is mentioned at a subsequent date, 'his place of study was in a garden, which he at length purchased, in the suburbs of Jena, not far from the Weselhofts' house, where, at that time, was the office of the *Allgemeine Litteraturzeitung*. Reckoning from the market-place of Jena, it lies on the south-west border of the town, between the Engelgatter and the Neuthor, in a hollow defile, through which a part of the Leutrabach flows round the city. On the top of the acclivity, from which there is a beautiful prospect into the valley of the Saale, and the fir mountains of the neighbouring forest, Schiller built himself a small house, with a single chamber. It was his favourite abode during hours of composition; a great part of the works he then wrote were written here. In winter he likewise dwelt apart from the tumult of men;—in the Griesbachs' house, on the outside of the city trench. On sitting down to his desk at night, he was wont to keep some strong coffee, or wine-chocolate, but more frequently a flask of old Rhenish or Champagne, standing by him, that he might from time to time repair the exhaustion of nature. Often the neighbours used to hear him earnestly declaiming in the silence of the night; and whoever had an opportunity of watching him on such occasions,—a thing very easy to be done, from the heights lying opposite his little garden-house, on the other side of the dale,—might see him now speaking aloud, and walking swiftly to and fro in his chamber, then suddenly throwing himself down into his chair, and writing; and drinking the while, sometimes more than once, from the glass standing near him. In winter he was to be found at his desk till four, or even five o'clock, in the morning; in summer till towards three. He then went to bed, from which he seldom rose till nine or ten.'

And again:

'At Weimar his present way of life was like his former one at Jena: his business was to study and compose; his recreations were in the circle of his family, where he could abandon himself to affections grave or trifling, and in frank cheerful intercourse with a few friends. Of the latter he had lately formed a social club, the meetings of which afforded him a regular and innocent amusement. He still loved solitary walks: in the Park at Weimar he might frequently be seen, wandering among

the groves and remote avenues, with a note-book in his hand; now loitering slowly along, now standing still, now moving rapidly on: if any one appeared in sight, he would dart into another alley, that his dream might not be broken. One of his favourite resorts, we are told, was the thickly-overshadowed rocky path which leads to the *Römische Haus*, a pleasure-house of the Duke's, built under the direction of Goethe. There he would often sit in the gloom of the crags overgrown with cypresses and boxwood; shady thickets before him; not far from the murmur of a little brook, which there gushes in a smooth slaty channel, and where some verses of Goethe are cut upon a brown plate of stone and fixed in the rock.'[9]

Such retirement alike from the tumults and the pleasures of busy men, though it seems to diminish the merit of virtuous conduct in Schiller, is itself, as hinted above, the best proof of his virtue. No man is born without ambitious worldly desires; and for no man, especially for no man like Schiller, can the victory over them be too complete. His duty lay in that mode of life; and he had both discovered his duty, and addressed himself with his whole might to perform it. Nor was it in estrangement from men's interests that this seclusion originated; but rather in deeper concern for these. From many indications, we can perceive that to Schiller the task of the Poet appeared of far weightier import to mankind, in these times, than that of any other man whatever. It seemed to him that he was 'casting his bread upon the waters, and would find it after many days;' that when the noise of all conquerors, and demagogues, and political reformers had quite died away, some tone of heavenly wisdom that had dwelt even in him might still linger among men, and be acknowledged as heavenly and priceless, whether as his or not; whereby, though dead, he would yet speak, and his spirit would live throughout all generations, when the syllables that once formed his name had passed into forgetfulness forever. We are told, 'he was in the 'highest degree philanthropic and humane: and often said that he 'had no deeper wish than to know all men happy.' What was still more, he strove, in his public and private capacity, to do his utmost for that end. Honest, merciful, disinterested he is at all times found: and for the great duty laid on him no man was ever more unweariedly ardent. It was his evening song and his morning prayer. He lived for it; and he died for it; 'sacrificing,' in the words of Goethe, 'his Life itself to this Delineating of Life.'

[9] *Life of Schiller.*

In collision with his fellow-men, for with him as with others this also was a part of his relation to society, we find him no less noble than in friendly union with them. He mingles in none of the controversies of the time; or only like a god in the battles of men. In his conduct towards inferiors, even ill-intentioned and mean inferiors, there is everywhere a true, dignified, patrician spirit. Ever witnessing, and inwardly lamenting, the baseness of vulgar Literature in his day, he makes no clamorous attacks on it; alludes to it only from afar: as in Milton's writings, so in his, few of his contemporaries are named, or hinted at; it was not with men, but with things that he had a warfare. The *Review of Bürger*, so often des anted on, was doubtless highly afflicting to that down-broken, unhappy poet; but no hostility to Bürger, only love and veneration for the Art he professed, is to be discerned in it. With Bürger, or with any other mortal, he had no quarrel: the favour of the public, which he himself enjoyed in the highest measure, he esteemed at no high value. 'The Artist,' said he in a noble passage, already known to English readers, 'the 'Artist, it is true, is the son of his time; but pity for him if he 'is its pupil, or even its favourite! Let some beneficent divinity 'snatch him, when a suckling, from the breast of his mother, and 'nurse him with the milk of a better time; that he may ripen 'to his full stature beneath a distant Grecian sky. And having 'grown to manhood, let him return, a foreign shape, into his 'century; not, however, to delight it by his presence, but dreadful 'like the son of Agamemnon, to purify it!' On the whole, Schiller has no trace of vanity; scarcely of pride, even in its best sense, for the modest self-consciousness, which characterises genius, is with him rather implied than openly expressed. He has no hatred; no anger, save against Falsehood and Baseness, where it may be called a holy anger. Presumptuous triviality stood bared in his keen glance; but his look is the noble scowl that curls the lip of an Apollo, when, pierced with sun-arrows, the serpent expires before him. In a word, we can say of Schiller, what can be said only of few in any country or time: He was a high ministering servant at Truth's altar; and bore him worthily of the office he held. Let this, and that it was even in our age, be forever remembered to his praise.

Schiller's intellectual character has, as indeed is always the case, an accurate conformity with his moral one. Here too he is simple in his excellence; lofty rather than expansive or varied; pure,

divinely ardent rather than great. A noble sensibility, the truest sympathy with Nature, in all forms, animates him; yet scarcely any creative gift altogether commensurate with this. If to his mind's eye all forms of Nature have a meaning and beauty, it is only under a few forms, chiefly of the severe or pathetic kind, that he can body forth this meaning, can represent as a Poet what as a Thinker he discerns and loves. We might say, his music is true spheral music; yet only with few tones, in simple modulation; no full choral harmony is to be heard in it. That Schiller, at least in his later years, attained a genuine poetic style, and dwelt, more or less, in the perennial regions of his Art, no one will deny: yet still his poetry shows rather like a partial than a universal gift; the laboured product of certain faculties rather than the spontaneous product of his whole nature. At the summit of the pyre there is indeed white flame; but the materials are not all inflamed, perhaps not all ignited. Nay often it seems to us, as if poetry were, on the whole, not his essential gift; as if his genius were reflective in a still higher degree than creative; philosophical and oratorical rather than poetic. To the last, there is a stiffness in him, a certain infusibility. His genius is not an Æolian-harp for the common wind to play with, and make wild free melody; but a scientific harmonica, which being artfully touched will yield rich notes, though in limited measure.

It may be, indeed, or rather it is highly probable, that of the gifts which lay in him only a small portion was unfolded: for we are to recollect that nothing came to him without a strenuous effort; and that he was called away at middle age. At all events, here as we find him, we should say, that of all his endowments the most perfect is understanding. Accurate, thorough insight is a quality we miss in none of his productions, whatever else may be wanting. He has an intellectual vision, clear, wide, piercing, methodical; a truly philosophic eye. Yet in regard to this also it is to be remarked, that the same simplicity, the same want of universality again displays itself. He looks aloft rather than around. It is in high, far-seeing philosophic views that he delights; in speculations on Art, on the dignity and destiny of Man, rather than on the common doings and interests of Men. Nevertheless these latter, mean as they seem, are boundless in significance; for every the poorest aspect of Nature, especially of living Nature, is a type and manifestation of the invisible spirit that works in Nature. There is properly no object trivial or insignificant;

but every finite thing, could we look well, is as a window, through which solemn vistas are opened into Infinitude itself. But neither as a Poet nor as a Thinker, neither in delineation nor in exposition and discussion, does Schiller more than glance at such objects. For the most part, the Common is to him still the Common; or is idealised, rather as it were by mechanical art than by inspiration: not by deeper poetic or philosophic inspection, disclosing new beauty in its everyday features, but rather by deducting these, by casting them aside, and dwelling on what brighter features may remain in it.

Herein Schiller, as indeed he himself was modestly aware, differs essentially from most great poets; and from none more than from his great contemporary, Goethe. Such intellectual preëminence as this, valuable though it be, is the easiest and the least valuable; a preëminence which, indeed, captivates the general eye, but may, after all, have little intrinsic grandeur. Less in rising into lofty abstractions lies the difficulty, than in seeing well and lovingly the complexities of what is at hand. He is wise who can instruct us and assist us in the business of daily virtuous living; he who trains us to see old truth under Academic formularies may be wise or not, as it chances; but we love to see Wisdom in unpretending forms, to recognise her royal features under week-day vesture.—There may be more true spiritual force in a Proverb than in a Philosophical System. A King in the midst of his body-guards, with all his trumpets, war-horses and gilt standard-bearers, will look great though he be little; but only some Roman Carus can give audience to satrap-ambassadors, while seated on the ground, with a woollen cap, and supping on boiled pease, like a common soldier.

In all Schiller's earlier writings, nay more or less in the whole of his writings, this aristocratic fastidiousness, this comparatively barren elevation, appears as a leading characteristic. In speculation he is either altogether abstract and systematic, or he dwells on old conventionally-noble themes; never looking abroad, over the many-coloured stream of life, to elucidate and ennoble it; or only looking on it, so to speak, from a college window. The philosophy even of his Histories, for example, founds itself mainly on the perfectibility of man, the effect of constitutions, of religions, and other such high, purely scientific objects. In his Poetry we have a similar manifestation. The interest turns on prescribed, old-established matters; common love-mania, passionate greatness,

enthusiasm for liberty and the like. This even in *Don Karlos;* a work of what may be called his transition-period, the turning-point between his earlier and his later period, where still we find Posa, the favourite hero, 'towering aloft, far-shining, clear, and also cold and vacant, as a sea-beacon.' In after years, Schiller himself saw well that the greatest lay not here. With unwearied effort he strove to lower and to widen his sphere; and not without success, as many of his Poems testify; for example, the *Lied der Glocke* (Song of the Bell), everyway a noble composition; and, in a still higher degree, the tragedy of *Wilhelm Tell*, the last, and, so far as spirit and style are concerned, the best of all his dramas.

Closely connected with this imperfection, both as cause and as consequence, is Schiller's singular want of Humour. Humour is properly the exponent of low things; that which first renders them poetical to the mind. The man of Humour sees common life, even mean life, under the new light of sportfulness and love; whatever has existence has a charm for him. Humour has justly been regarded as the finest perfection of poetic genius. He who wants it, be his other gifts what they may, has only half a mind; an eye for what is above him, not for what is about him or below him. Now, among all writers of any real poetic genius, we cannot recollect one who, in this respect, exhibits such total deficiency as Schiller. In his whole writings there is scarcely any vestige of it, scarcely any attempt that way. His nature was without Humour; and he had too true a feeling to adopt any counterfeit in its stead. Thus no drollery or caricature, still less any barren mockery, which, in the hundred cases are all that we find passing current as Humour, discover themselves in Schiller. His works are full of laboured earnestness; he is the gravest of all writers. Some of his critical discussions, especially in the *Æsthetische Briefe*, where he designates the ultimate height of a man's culture by the title *Spieltrieb* (literally, Sport-impulse), prove that he knew what Humour was, and how essential; as indeed, to his intellect, all forms of excellence, even the most alien to his own, were painted with a wonderful fidelity. Nevertheless, he himself attains not that height which he saw so clearly; to the last the *Spieltrieb* could be little more than a theory with him. With the single exception of *Wallensteins Lager*, where too, the Humour, if it be such, is not deep, his other attempts at mirth, fortunately very few, are of the heaviest. A rigid intensity, a serious enthusiastic ardour, majesty rather than grace, still more than lightness or

sportfulness, characterises him. Wit he had, such wit as keen intellectual insight can give; yet even of this no large endowment. Perhaps he was too honest, too sincere, for the exercise of wit; too intent on the deeper relations of things to note their more transient collisions. Besides, he dealt in Affirmation, and not in Negation; in which last, it has been said, the material of wit chiefly lies.

These observations are to point out for us the special department and limits of Schiller's excellence; nowise to call in question its reality. Of his noble sense for Truth both in speculation and in action; of his deep genial insight into Nature; and the living harmony in which he renders back what is highest and grandest in Nature, no reader of his works need be reminded. In whatever belongs to the pathetic, the heroic, the tragically elevating, Schiller is at home; a master; nay perhaps the greatest of all late poets. To the assiduous student, moreover, much else that lay in Schiller, but was never worked into shape, will become partially visible: deep, inexhaustible mines of thought and feeling; a whole world of gifts, the finest produce of which was but beginning to be realised. To his high-minded, unwearied efforts what was impossible, had length of years been granted him! There is a tone in some of his later pieces, which here and there breathes of the very highest region of Art. Nor are the natural or accidental defects we have noticed in his genius, even as it stands, such as to exclude him from the rank of great Poets. Poets whom the whole world reckons great have, more than once, exhibited the like. Milton, for example, shares most of them with him: like Schiller, he dwells, with full power, only in the high and earnest; in all other provinces exhibiting a certain inaptitude, an elephantine unpliancy; he too has little Humour; his coarse invective has in it contemptuous emphasis enough, yet scarcely any graceful sport. Indeed, on the positive side also, these two worthies are not without a resemblance. Under far other circumstances, with less massiveness and vehement strength of soul, there is in Schiller the same intensity; the same concentration, and towards similar objects, towards whatever is Sublime in Nature and in Art; which sublimities they both, each in his several way, worship with undivided heart. There is not in Schiller's nature the same rich complexity of rhythm as in Milton's, with its depths of linked sweetness; yet in Schiller too there is something of the same pure swelling force, some tone which, like Milton's, is deep, majestic, solemn.

It was as a Dramatic Author that Schiller distinguished himself to the world: yet often we feel as if chance rather than a natural tendency had led him into this province; as if his talent were essentially, in a certain style, lyrical, perhaps even epic, rather than dramatic. He dwelt within himself, and could not without effort, and then only within a certain range, body forth other forms of being. Nay much of what is called his poetry, seems to us, as hinted above, oratorical rather than poetical; his first bias might have led him to be a speaker rather than a singer. Nevertheless, a pure fire dwelt deep in his soul; and only in Poetry, of one or the other sort, could this find utterance. The rest of his nature, at the same time, has a certain prosaic rigour; so that not without strenuous and complex endeavours, long persisted in, could its poetic quality evolve itself. Quite pure, and as the all-sovereign element, it perhaps never did evolve itself; and among such complex endeavours, a small accident might influence large portions of its course.

Of Schiller's honest undivided zeal in this great problem of self-cultivation, we have often spoken. What progress he had made, and in spite of what difficulties, appears if we contrast his earlier compositions with those of his later years. A few specimens of both sorts we shall here present. By this means, too, such of our readers as are unacquainted with Schiller may gain some clearer notion of his poetic individuality than any description of ours could give. We shall take the *Robbers*, as his first performance, what he himself calls 'a monster produced by the unnatural union of Genius with Thraldom;' the fierce fuliginous fire that burns in that singular piece will still be discernible in separated passages. The following Scene, even in the yeasty vehicle of our common English version, has not wanted its admirers; it is the Second of the Third Act:

Country on the Danube.

THE ROBBERS.

Camped on a Height, under Trees: the Horses are grazing on the Hill farther down.

MOOR. I can no farther [*throws himself on the ground*]. My limbs ache as if ground in pieces. My tongue parched as a potsherd. [*Schweitzer glides away unperceived.*] I would ask you to fetch me a handful of water from the stream; but ye all are wearied to death.

SCHWARZ. And the wine too is all down there, in our jacks.

MOOR. See how lovely the harvest looks! The trees almost breaking under their load. The vine full of hope.

GRIMM. It is a plentiful year.

MOOR. Think'st thou?—And so *one* toil in the world will be repaid. *One?*—Yet overnight there may come a hailstorm, and shatter it all to ruin.

SCHWARZ. Possible enough. It might all be ruined two hours before reaping.

MOOR. Ay, so say I. It will all be ruined. Why should man prosper in what he has from the Ant, when he fails in what makes him like the Gods?—Or is this the true aim of his Destiny?

SCHWARZ. I know it not.

MOOR. Thou hast said well; and done still better, if thou never triedst to know it!—Brother,—I have looked at men, at their insect anxieties and giant projects—their godlike schemes and mouselike occupations, their wondrous race-running after Happiness;—he trusting to the gallop of his horse,—he to the nose of his ass,—a third to his own legs; this whirling lottery of life, in which so many a creature stakes his innocence, and—his Heaven! all trying for a prize, and—blanks are the whole drawing,—there was not a prize in the batch. It is a drama, Brother, to bring tears into thy eyes, if it tickle thy midriff to laughter.

SCHWARZ. How gloriously the sun is setting yonder!

MOOR [*lost in the view*]. So dies a Hero! To be worshipped!

GRIMM. It seems to move thee.

MOOR. When I was a lad—it was my darling thought to live so, to die so—[*with suppressed pain*]. It was a lad's thought!

GRIMM. I hope so, truly.

MOOR [*draws his hat down on his face*]. There was a time—Leave me alone, comrades.

SCHWARZ. Moor! Moor! What, Devil?—How his colour goes!

GRIMM. Ha! What ails him? Is he ill?

MOOR. There was a time when I could not sleep, if my evening prayer had been forgotten—

GRIMM. Art thou going crazed? Will Moor let such milksop fancies tutor him?

MOOR [*lays his head on Grimm's breast*]. Brother! Brother!

GRIMM. Come! don't be a child,—I beg—

MOOR. Were I a child!—O, were I one!

GRIMM. Pooh! pooh!

SCHWARZ. Cheer up. Look at the brave landscape,—the fine evening.

MOOR. Yes, Friends, this world is all so lovely.

SCHWARZ. There now—that's right.

MOOR. This Earth so glorious.

GRIMM. Right,—right—that is it.

MOOR [*sinking back*]. And I so hideous in this lovely world, and I a monster in this glorious Earth.

GRIMM. Out on it!

MOOR. My innocence! My innocence!—See, all things are gone forth to bask in the peaceful beam of the Spring: why must I alone inhale the torments of Hell out of the joys of Heaven?—That all should be so happy, all so married together by the spirit of peace!—The whole world *one* family, its Father above—that Father not *mine!*—I alone the castaway,—I alone struck out from the company of the just;—for me no child to lisp my name,—never for me the languishing look of one whom I love,—never, never, the embracing of a bosom-friend [*dashing wildly back*]. Encircled with murderers,—serpents hissing round me,—rushing down to the gulf of perdition on the eddying torrent of wickedness,—amid the flowers of the glad world, a howling Abaddon!

SCHWARZ [*to the rest*]. How *is* this? I never saw him so.

MOOR [*with piercing sorrow*]. O, that I might return into my mother's womb,—that I might be born a beggar!—No! I durst not pray, O Heaven, to be as one of these day-labourers—O, I would toil till the blood ran down my temples to buy myself the pleasure of one noontide sleep,—the blessedness of a single tear!

GRIMM [*to the rest*]. Patience, a moment. The fit is passing.

MOOR. There *was* a time, too, when I could weep—O ye days of peace, thou castle of my father, ye green lovely valleys! O all ye Elysian scenes of my childhood! will ye never come again, never with your balmy sighing cool my burning bosom? Mourn with me, Nature! They will never come again, never cool my burning bosom with their balmy sighing. They are gone! gone! and will not return!

Or take that still wilder monologue of Moor's on the old subject of suicide; in the midnight Forest, among the sleeping Robbers:

He lays aside the lute, and walks up and down in deep thought.

Who shall warrant me?——'Tis all so dark,—perplexed labyrinths,—no outlet, no loadstar—Were it but *over* with this last draught of breath—*Over* like a sorry farce.—But whence this fierce *Hunger* after *Happiness?* whence this ideal of a *never-reached* perfection? this *continuation* of uncompleted plans?—if the pitiful pressure of this pitiful thing [*holding out a Pistol*] makes the wise man equal with the fool, the coward with the brave, the noble-minded with the caitiff?—There is so divine a harmony in all irrational Nature, why should there be this dissonance in rational?—No! no! there is somewhat beyond, for I have yet never known happiness.

Think ye, I will tremble? spirits of my murdered ones! I will not tremble [*trembling violently*].—Your feeble dying moan,—your black-choked faces,—your frightfully-gaping wounds are but links of an unbreakable chain of Destiny; and depend at last on my childish sports, on the whims of my nurses and pedagogues, on the temperament of my father, on the blood of my mother—[*shaken with horror*]. Why has my Perillus made of me a Brazen Bull to roast mankind in my glowing belly?

[*Gazing on the Pistol.*] TIME and ETERNITY—linked together by a single moment!—Dread key, that shuttest behind me the prison of Life, and before me openest the dwelling of eternal Night—say—O, say,—*whither*,—*whither* wilt thou lead me? Foreign, never circumnavigated Land!—See, manhood waxes faint under *this* image; the effort of the finite gives up, and Fancy, the capricious ape of Sense, juggles our credulity with strange shadows.—No! no! It becomes not a man to waver. Be what thou wilt, *nameless Yonder*—so this Me keep but true. Be what thou wilt, so I take *myself* along with me—!—Outward things are but the colouring of the man—I am my Heaven and my Hell.

What if Thou shouldst send me *companionless* to some burnt and blasted circle of the Universe; which Thou hast banished from thy sight; where the lone darkness and the motionless desert were my prospects—forever?—I would people the silent wilderness with my fantasies; I should have Eternity for leisure to unravel the perplexed image of the boundless woe.—Or wilt Thou lead me through still other births; still other scenes of pain, from stage to stage—onwards to Annihilation? The life-threads that are to be woven for me Yonder, cannot I tear them asunder, as I do these?—Thou canst make me Nothing;—but *this* freedom canst Thou not take from me. [*He loads the Pistol. Suddenly he stops.*] And shall I for terror of a miserable life—die?—Shall I give wretchedness the victory over me?—No, I will endure it [*he throws the Pistol away*]. Let misery blunt itself on my pride! I will go through with it.[10]

And now with these ferocities, and Sibylline frenzies, compare the placid strength of the following delineation, also of a stern character, from the *Maid of Orleans;* where Talbot, the gray veteran, dark, unbelieving, indomitable, passes down, as he thinks, to the land of utter Nothingness, contemptuous even of the Fate that destroys him, and

> In death reposes on the soil of France,
> Like hero on his unsurrendered shield.

[10] Act iv. Scene 6.

It is the sixth Scene of the third Act; in the heat of a Battle:

The scene changes to an open Space encircled with Trees. During the music Soldiers are seen hastily retreating across the Background.

TALBOT, *leaning on* FASTOLF, *and accompanied by Soldiers. Soon after,* LIONEL.

TALBOT.

Here, set me down beneath this tree, and you
Betake yourselves again to battle: quick!
I need no help to die.

FASTOLF.

O day of woe! [*Lionel enters.*
Look what a sight awaits you, Lionel!
Our leader wounded, dying!

LIONEL.

God forbid!
O noble Talbot, this is not a time to die:
Yield not to Death; force faltering Nature
By your strength of soul, that life depart not!

TALBOT.

In vain! the day of Destiny is come
That levels with the dust our power in France.
In vain, in the fierce clash of desp'rate battle,
Have I risk'd my utmost to withstand it:
The bolt has smote and crush'd me, and I lie
To rise no more forever. Rheims is lost;
Make haste to rescue Paris.

LIONEL.

Paris is the Dauphin's:
A post arrived even now with th' evil news
It had surrender'd.

TALBOT [*tears away his bandages*].

Then flow out, ye life-streams;
This sun is growing loathsome to me.

LIONEL.

Fastolf,
Convey him to the rear: this post can hold

Few instants more; yon coward knaves fall back,
Resistless comes the Witch, and havoc round her.

TALBOT.

Madness, thou conquerest, and I must yield:
Against Stupidity the Gods themselves are powerless.
High Reason, radiant Daughter of the head of God,
Wise Foundress of the system of the Universe,
Conductress of the Stars, who art thou, then,
If tied to th' tail o' th' wild horse, Superstition,
Thou must plunge, eyes open, vainly shrieking,
Sheer down with that drunk Beast to the Abyss?
Cursed who sets his life upon the great
And dignified; and with forecasting spirit
Lays out wise plans! The Fool-King's is this World.

LIONEL.

O! Death is near! Think of your God, and pray!

TALBOT.

Were we, as brave men, worsted by the brave,
'T had been but Fortune's common fickleness:
But that a paltry Farce should tread us down!—
Did toil and peril, all our earnest life,
Deserve no graver issue?

LIONEL [*grasps his hand*].

Talbot, farewell!
The meed of bitter tears I'll duly pay you,
When the fight is done, should I outlive it.
But now Fate calls me to the field, where yet
She wav'ring sits, and shakes her doubtful urn.
Farewell! we meet beyond the unseen shore.
Brief parting for long friendship! God be with you! [*Exit.*

TALBOT.

Soon it is over, and to th' Earth I render,
To th' everlasting Sun, the transient atoms
Which for pain and pleasure join'd to form me;
And of the mighty Talbot, whose renown
Once fill'd the world, remains nought but a handful
Of flitting dust. Thus man comes to his end;
And all our conquest in the fight of Life
Is knowledge that 'tis Nothing, and contempt
For hollow shows which once we chas'd and worship'd.

SCENE VII.

Enter CHARLES, BURGUNDY, DUNOIS, DU CHATEL, *and Soldiers.*

BURGUNDY.

The trench is stormed.

DUNOIS.

Bravo! The fight is ours.

CHARLES [*observing Talbot*].

Ha! who is this that to the light of day
Is bidding his constrained and sad farewell?
His bearing speaks no common man: go, haste,
Assist him, if assistance yet avail.
[*Soldiers from the Dauphin's suite step forward.*

FASTOLF.

Back! Keep away! Approach not the Departing,
Him whom in life ye never wished too near.

BURGUNDY.

What do I see? Great Talbot in his blood!
[*He goes towards him. Talbot gazes fixedly at him, and dies.*

FASTOLF.

Off, Burgundy! With th' aspect of a Traitor
Disturb not the last moment of a Hero.

The 'Power-words and Thunder-words,' as the Germans call them, so frequent in the *Robbers*,[11] are altogether wanting here; that volcanic fury has assuaged itself; instead of smoke and red lava, we have sunshine and a verdant world. For still more striking examples of this benignant change, we might refer to many scenes (too long for our present purposes) in *Wallenstein*, and indeed in all the Dramas which followed this, and most of all in *Wilhelm Tell*, which is the latest of them. The careful, and in general truly poetic structure of these works, considered as complete Poems, would exhibit it infinitely better; but for this object,

[11] Thus, to take one often-cited instance, Moor's simple question, 'Whether there is any powder left?' receives this emphatic answer: 'Powder enough to blow the Earth into the Moon!'

larger limits than ours at present, and studious Readers as well as a Reviewer, were essential.

In his smaller Poems the like progress is visible. Schiller's works should all be dated, as we study them; but indeed the most, by internal evidence, date themselves.—Besides the *Lied der Glocke*, already mentioned, there are many lyrical pieces of high merit; particularly a whole series of *Ballads*, nearly every one of which is true and poetical. The *Ritter Toggenburg*, the *Dragon-fight*, the *Diver*, are all well known; the *Cranes of Ibycus* has in it, under this simple form, something Old-Grecian, an emphasis, a prophetic gloom which might seem borrowed even from the spirit of Æschylus. But on these, or any farther on the other poetical works of Schiller, we must not dilate at present. One little piece, which lies by us translated, we may give, as a specimen of his style in this lyrical province, and therewith terminate this part of our subject. It is entitled *Alpenlied* (Song of the Alps), and seems to require no commentary. Perhaps something of the clear, melodious, yet still somewhat metallic tone of the original may penetrate even through our version.

Song of the Alps.

By the edge of the chasm is a slippery Track,
The torrent beneath, and the mist hanging o'er thee;
The cliffs of the mountain, huge, rugged and black,
Are frowning like giants before thee:
And, wouldst thou not waken the sleeping Lawine,
Walk silent and soft through the deadly ravine.

That Bridge, with its dizzying perilous span,
Aloft o'er the gulf and its flood suspended,
Think'st thou it was built by the art of man,
By his hand that grim old arch was bended?
Far down in the jaws of the gloomy abyss
The water is boiling and hissing,—forever will hiss.

That Gate through the rocks is as darksome and drear,
As if to the region of Shadows it carried:
Yet enter! A sweet laughing landscape is here,
Where the Spring with the Autumn is married.
From the world with its sorrows and warfare and wail,
O, could I but hide in this bright little vale!

Four Rivers rush down from on high,
Their spring will be hidden forever;
Their course is to all the four points of the sky,
To each point of the sky is a river;
And fast as they start from their old Mother's feet,
They dash forth, and no more will they meet.

Two Pinnacles rise to the depths of the Blue:
Aloft on their white summits glancing,
Bedeck'd in their garments of golden dew,
The Clouds of the sky are dancing;
There threading alone their lightsome maze,
Uplifted apart from all mortals' gaze.

And high on her ever-enduring throne
The Queen of the mountains reposes;
Her head serene, and azure, and lone,
A diamond crown encloses;
The Sun with his darts shoots round it keen and hot,
He gilds it always, he warms it not.

Of Schiller's Philosophic talent, still more of the results he had arrived at in philosophy, there were much to be said and thought; which we must not enter upon here. As hinted above, his primary endowment seems to us fully as much philosophical as poetical: his intellect, at all events, is peculiarly of that character; strong, penetrating, yet systematic and scholastic, rather than intuitive; and manifesting this tendency both in the objects it treats, and in its mode of treating them. The Transcendental Philosophy, which arose in Schiller's busiest era, could not remain without influence on him: he had carefully studied Kant's System, and appears to have not only admitted but zealously appropriated its fundamental doctrines; remoulding them, however, into his own peculiar forms, so that they seem no longer borrowed, but permanently acquired, not less Schiller's than Kant's. Some, perhaps little aware of his natural wants and tendencies, are of opinion that these speculations did not profit him: Schiller himself, on the other hand, appears to have been well contented with his Philosophy; in which, as harmonised with his Poetry, the assurance and safe anchorage for his moral nature might lie.

'From the opponents of the New Philosophy,' says he, 'I expect not that tolerance, which is shown to every other system, no better seen into than this: for Kant's Philosophy itself, in its leading points, practises

no tolerance; and bears much too rigorous a character, to leave any room for accommodation. But in my eyes this does it honour; proving how little it can endure to have truth tampered with. Such a Philosophy will not be discussed with a mere shake of the head. In the open, clear, accessible field of Inquiry it builds up its system; seeks no shade, makes no reservation: but even as it treats its neighbours, so it requires to be treated; and may be forgiven for lightly esteeming everything but Proofs. Nor am I terrified to think that the Law of Change, from which no human and no divine work finds grace, will operate on this Philosophy, as on every other, and one day its Form will be destroyed: but its Foundations will not have this destiny to fear; for ever since mankind has existed, and any Reason among mankind, these same first principles have been admitted, and on the whole acted upon.'[12]

Schiller's philosophical performances relate chiefly to matters of Art; not, indeed, without significant glances into still more important regions of speculation: nay Art, as he viewed it, has its basis on the most important interests of man, and of itself involves the harmonious adjustment of these. We have already undertaken to present our readers, on a future occasion, with some abstract of the *Æsthetic Letters*, one of the deepest, most compact pieces of reasoning we are anywhere acquainted with: by that opportunity, the general character of Schiller, as a Philosopher, will best fall to be discussed. Meanwhile, the two following brief passages, as some indication of his views on the highest of all philosophical questions, may stand here without commentary. He is speaking of *Wilhelm Meister*, and in the first extract, of the *Fair Saint's Confessions*, which occupy the Sixth Book of that work:

'The transition from Religion in general to the Christian Religion, by the experience of sin, is excellently conceived. * * * I find virtually in the Christian System the rudiments of the Highest and Noblest; and the different phases of this System, in practical life, are so offensive and mean, precisely because they are bungled representations of that same Highest. If you study the specific character of Christianity, what distinguishes it from all monotheistic Religions, it lies in nothing else than in that *making-dead of the Law*, the removal of that Kantean Imperative, instead of which Christianity requires a free Inclination. It is thus, in its pure form, a representing of Moral Beauty, or the Incarnation of the Holy; and in this sense, the only *æsthetic* Religion: hence, too, I explain to myself why it so prospers with female natures, and only in women is now to be met with under a tolerable figure.'[13]

[12] *Correspondence with Goethe*, i. 58. [13] *Correspondence*, i. 195.

'But in seriousness,' he says elsewhere, 'whence may it proceed that you have had a man educated, and in all points equipt, without ever coming upon certain wants which only Philosophy can meet? I am convinced it is entirely attributable to the *æsthetic direction* you have taken, through the whole Romance. Within the æsthetic temper there arises no want of those grounds of comfort, which are to be drawn from speculation: such a temper has self-subsistence, has infinitude, within itself; only when the Sensual and the Moral in man strive hostilely together, need help be sought of pure Reason. A healthy poetic nature wants, as you yourself say, no Moral Law, no Rights of Man, no Political Metaphysics. You might have added as well, it wants no Deity, no Immortality, to stay and uphold itself withal. Those three points round which, in the long-run, all speculation turns, may in truth afford such a nature matter for poetic play, but can never become serious concerns and necessities for it.' [14]

This last seems a singular opinion; and may prove, if it be correct, that Schiller himself was no 'healthy poetic nature;' for undoubtedly with him those three points were 'serious concerns and necessities;' as many portions of his works, and various entire treatises, will testify. Nevertheless, it plays an important part in his theories of Poetry; and often, under milder forms, returns on us there.

But, without entering farther on those complex topics, we must here for the present take leave of Schiller. Of his merits we have all along spoken rather on the negative side; and we rejoice in feeling authorised to do so. That any German writer, especially one so dear to us, should already stand so high with British readers that, in admiring him, the critic may also, without prejudice to right feeling on the subject, coolly judge of him, cannot be other than a gratifying circumstance. Perhaps there is no other true Poet of that nation with whom the like course would be suitable.

Connected with this there is one farther observation we must make before concluding. Among younger students of German Literature, the question often arises, and is warmly mooted: Whether Schiller or Goethe is the greater Poet? Of this question we must be allowed to say that it seems rather a slender one, and for two reasons. First, because Schiller and Goethe are of totally dissimilar endowments and endeavours, in regard to all matters intellectual, and cannot well be compared together as Poets.

[14] *Correspondence*, ii. 131.

Secondly, because if the question mean to ask, which Poet is on the whole the rarer and more excellent, as probably it does, it must be considered as long ago abundantly answered. To the clear-sighted and modest Schiller, above all, such a question would have appeared surprising. No one knew better than himself, that as Goethe was a born Poet, so he was in great part a made Poet; that as the one spirit was intuitive, all-embracing, instinct with melody, so the other was scholastic, divisive, only partially and as it were artificially melodious. Besides, Goethe has lived to perfect his natural gift, which the less happy Schiller was not permitted to do. The former accordingly is the national Poet; the latter is not, and never could have been. We once heard a German remark that readers till their twenty-fifth year usually prefer Schiller; after their twenty-fifth year, Goethe. This probably was no unfair illustration of the question. Schiller can seem higher than Goethe only because he is narrower. Thus to unpractised eyes, a Peak of Teneriffe, nay a Strasburg Minster, when we stand on it, may seem higher than a Chimborazo; because the former rise abruptly, without abutment or environment; the latter rises gradually, carrying half a world aloft with it; and only the deeper azure of the heavens, the widened horizon, the 'eternal sunshine,' disclose to the geographer that the 'Region of Change' lies far below him.

However, let us not divide these two Friends, who in life were so benignantly united. Without asserting for Schiller any claim that even enemies can dispute, enough will remain for him. We may say that, as a Poet and Thinker, he attained to a perennial Truth, and ranks among the noblest productions of his century and nation. Goethe may continue *the* German Poet, but neither through long generations can Schiller be forgotten. 'His works 'too, the memory of what he did and was, will arise afar off like 'a towering landmark in the solitude of the Past, when distance 'shall have dwarfed into invisibility many lesser people that once 'encompassed him, and hid him from the near beholder.'

THE NIBELUNGEN LIED.

THE NIBELUNGEN LIED.[1]

[1831.]

In the year 1757, the Swiss Professor Bodmer printed an ancient poetical manuscript, under the title of *Chriemhilden Rache und die Klage* (Chriemhilde's Revenge, and the Lament); which may be considered as the first of a series, or stream of publications and speculations still rolling on, with increased current, to the present day. Not, indeed, that all these had their source or determining cause in so insignificant a circumstance; their source, or rather thousand sources, lay far elsewhere. As has often been remarked, a certain antiquarian tendency in literature, a fonder, more earnest looking back into the Past, began about that time to manifest itself in all nations (witness our own *Percy's Reliques*): this was among the first distinct symptoms of it in Germany; where, as with ourselves, its manifold effects are still visible enough.

Some fifteen years after Bodmer's publication, which, for the rest, is not celebrated as an editorial feat, one C. H. Müller undertook a *Collection of German Poems from the Twelfth, Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries;* wherein, among other articles, he reprinted Bodmer's *Chriemhilde* and *Klage*, with a highly remarkable addition prefixed to the former, essential indeed to the right understanding of it; and the whole now stood before the world as one Poem, under the name of the *Nibelungen Lied*, or Lay of the Nibelungen. It has since been ascertained that the *Klage* is a foreign inferior appendage; at best, related only as epilogue to the main work: meanwhile out of this *Nibelungen*, such as it was, there soon proceeded new inquiries and kindred enterprises. For much as

[1] Westminster Review, No. 29.—*Das Nibelungen Lied, übersetzt von Karl Simrock* (The Nibelungen Lied, translated by Karl Simrock). 2 vols. 12mo. Berlin, 1827.

the Poem, in the shape it here bore, was defaced and marred, it failed not to attract observation: to all open-minded lovers of poetry, especially where a strong patriotic feeling existed, the singular antique *Nibelungen* was an interesting appearance. Johannes Müller, in his famous *Swiss History*, spoke of it in warm terms: subsequently, August Wilhelm Schlegel, through the medium of the *Deutsche Museum*, succeeded in awakening something like a universal popular feeling on the subject; and, as a natural consequence, a whole host of Editors and Critics, of deep and of shallow endeavour, whose labours we yet see in progress. The *Nibelungen* has now been investigated, translated, collated, commented upon, with more or less result, to almost boundless lengths: besides the Work named at the head of this Paper, and which stands there simply as one of the latest, we have Versions into the modern tongue by Von der Hagen, by Hinsberg, Lachmann, Büsching, Zeune, the last in Prose, and said to be worthless; Criticisms, Introductions, Keys, and so forth, by innumerable others, of whom we mention only Docen and the Brothers Grimm.

By which means, not only has the Poem itself been elucidated with all manner of researches, but its whole environment has come forth in new light: the scene and personages it relates to, the other fictions and traditions connected with it, have attained a new importance and coherence. Manuscripts, that for ages had lain dormant, have issued from their archives into public view; books that had circulated only in mean guise for the amusement of the people, have become important, not to one or two virtuosos, but to the general body of the learned: and now a whole System of antique Teutonic Fiction and Mythology unfolds itself, shedding here and there a real though feeble and uncertain glimmer over what was once the total darkness of the old Time. No fewer than Fourteen ancient Traditionary Poems, all strangely intertwisted, and growing out of and into one another, have come to light among the Germans; who now, in looking back, find that they too, as well as the Greeks, have their Heroic Age, and round the old Valhalla, as their Northern Pantheon, a world of demi-gods and wonders.

Such a phenomenon, unexpected till of late, cannot but interest a deep-thinking, enthusiastic people. For the *Nibelungen* especially, which lies as the centre and distinct keystone of the whole too chaotic System,—let us say rather, blooms as a firm sunny island in the middle of these cloud-covered, ever-shifting sand-whirlpools,—they cannot sufficiently testify their love and venera-

tion. Learned professors lecture on the *Nibelungen* in public schools, with a praiseworthy view to initiate the German youth in love of their fatherland; from many zealous and nowise ignorant critics we hear talk of a 'great Northern Epos,' of a 'German Iliad;' the more saturnine are shamed into silence, or hollow mouth-homage: thus from all quarters comes a sound of joyful acclamation; the *Nibelungen* is welcomed as a precious national possession, recovered after six centuries of neglect, and takes undisputed place among the sacred books of German literature.

Of these curious transactions some rumour has not failed to reach us in England, where our minds, from their own antiquarian disposition, were willing enough to receive it. Abstracts and extracts of the *Nibelungen* have been printed in our language; there have been disquisitions on it in our Reviews: hitherto, however, such as nowise to exhaust the subject. On the contrary, where so much was to be told at once, the speaker might be somewhat puzzled where to begin: it was a much readier method to begin with the end, or with any part of the middle, than like Hamilton's Ram (whose example is too little followed in literary narrative) to begin with the beginning. Thus has our stock of intelligence come rushing out on us quite promiscuously and pellmell; whereby the whole matter could not but acquire a tortuous, confused, altogether inexplicable and even dreary aspect; and the class of 'well-informed persons' now find themselves in that uncomfortable position, where they are obliged to profess admiration, and at the same time feel that, except by name, they know not what the thing admired is. Such a position towards the venerable *Nibelungen*, which is no less bright and graceful than historically significant, cannot be the right one. Moreover, as appears to us, it might be somewhat mended by very simple means. Let any one that had honestly read the *Nibelungen*, which in these days is no surprising achievement, only tell us what he found there, and nothing that he did not find: we should then know something, and, what were still better, be ready for knowing more. To search out the secret roots of such a production, ramified through successive layers of centuries, and drawing nourishment from each, may be work, and too hard work, for the deepest philosopher and critic; but to look with natural eyes on what part of it stands visibly above ground, and record his own experiences thereof, is what any reasonable mortal, if he will take heed, can do.

Some such slight service we here intend proffering to our

readers: let them glance with us a little into that mighty maze of Northern Archæology; where, it may be, some pleasant prospects will open. If the *Nibelungen* is what we have called it, a firm sunny island amid the weltering chaos of antique tradition, it must be worth visiting on general grounds; nay if the primeval rudiments of it have the antiquity assigned them, it belongs specially to us English *Teutones* as well as to the German.

Far be it from us, meanwhile, to venture rashly, or farther than is needful, into that same traditionary chaos, fondly named the 'Cycle of Northern Fiction,' with its Fourteen Sectors (or separate Poems), which are rather Fourteen shoreless Limbos, where we hear of pieces containing 'a hundred thousand verses,' and 'seventy thousand verses,' as of a quite natural affair! How travel through that inane country; by what art discover the little grain of Substance that casts such multiplied immeasurable Shadows? The primeval Mythus, were it at first philosophical truth, or were it historical incident, floats too vaguely on the breath of men: each successive Singer and Redactor furnishes it with new personages, new scenery, to please a new audience; each has the privilege of inventing, and the far wider privilege of borrowing and new-modelling from *all* that have preceded him. Thus though Tradition may have but one root, it grows like a Banian, into a whole overarching labyrinth of trees. Or rather might we say, it is a Hall of Mirrors, where in pale light each mirror reflects, convexly or concavely, not only some real Object, but the Shadows of this in other mirrors; which again do the like for it: till in such reflection and re-reflection the whole immensity is filled with dimmer and dimmer shapes; and no firm scene lies round us, but a dislocated, distorted chaos, fading away on all hands, in the distance, into utter night. Only to some brave Von der Hagen, furnished with indefatigable ardour, and a deep, almost religious love, is it given to find sure footing there, and see his way. All those *Dukes of Aquitania*, therefore, and *Etzel's Court-holdings*, and *Dietrichs* and *Sigenots* we shall leave standing where they are. Such as desire farther information will find an intelligible account of the whole Series or Cycle, in Messrs. Weber and Jamieson's *Illustrations of Northern Antiquities;* and all possible furtherance, in the numerous German works above alluded to; among which Von der Hagen's writings, though not the readiest, are probably the safest guides. But for us, our business here is with the *Nibelungen*, the inhabited poetic country round which all these wildernesses lie; only as environments of

which, as routes to which, are they of moment to us. Perhaps our shortest and smoothest route will be through the *Heldenbuch* (Hero-book); which is greatly the most important of these subsidiary Fictions, not without interest of its own, and closely related to the *Nibelungen*. This *Heldenbuch*, therefore, we must now address ourselves to traverse with all despatch. At the present stage of the business too, we shall forbear any historical inquiry and argument concerning the date and local habitation of those Traditions; reserving what little is to be said on that matter till the Traditions themselves have become better known to us. Let the reader, on trust for the present, transport himself into the twelfth or thirteenth century; and therefrom looking back into the sixth or fifth, see what presents itself.

Of the *Heldenbuch*, tried on its own merits, and except as illustrating that other far worthier Poem, or at most as an old national, and still in some measure popular book, we should have felt strongly inclined to say, as the Curate in *Don Quixote* so often did, *Al corral con ello*, Out of window with it! Doubtless there are touches of beauty in the work, and even a sort of heartiness and antique quaintness in its wildest follies; but on the whole that George-and-Dragon species of composition has long ceased to find favour with any one; and except for its groundwork, more or less discernible, of old Northern Fiction, this *Heldenbuch* has little to distinguish it from these. Nevertheless, what is worth remark, it seems to have been a far higher favourite than the *Nibelungen* with ancient readers: it was printed soon after the invention of printing; some think in 1472, for there is no place or date on the first edition; at all events, in 1491, in 1509, and repeatedly since; whereas the *Nibelungen*, though written earlier, and in worth immeasurably superior, had to remain in manuscript three centuries longer. From which, for the thousandth time, inferences might be drawn as to the infallibility of popular taste, and its value as a criterion for poetry. However, it is probably in virtue of this neglect, that the *Nibelungen* boasts of its actual purity; that it now comes before us, clear and graceful as it issued from the old Singer's head and heart; not overloaded with Ass-eared Giants, Fiery Dragons, Dwarfs and Hairy Women, as the *Heldenbuch* is, many of which, as charity would hope, may be the produce of a later age than that famed *Swabian Era*, to which these poems, as we now see them, are commonly referred. Indeed, one Casper

von Roen is understood to have passed the whole *Heldenbuch* through his limbec, in the fifteenth century; but like other rectifiers, instead of purifying it, to have only drugged it with still fiercer ingredients to suit the sick appetite of the time.

Of this drugged and adulterated *Hero-book* (the only one we yet have, though there is talk of a better) we shall quote the long Title-page of Lessing's Copy, the edition of 1560; from which, with a few intercalated observations, the reader's curiosity may probably obtain what little satisfaction it wants:

Das Heldenbuch, welchs auffs new corrigirt und gebessert ist, mit shönen Figuren geziert. Gedrückt zu Frankfurt am Mayn, durch Weygand Han und Sygmund Feyerabend, &c. That is to say:

'The *Hero-book*, which is of new corrected and improved, adorned 'with beautiful Figures. Printed at Frankfurt on the Mayn, 'through Weygand Han and Sygmund Feyerabend.

'*Part First* saith of Kaiser Ottnit and the little King Elberich, 'how they with great peril, over sea, in Heathendom, won from a 'king his daughter (and how he in lawful marriage took her to 'wife).'

From which announcement the reader already guesses the contents: how this little King Elberich was a Dwarf or Elf, some half-span long, yet full of cunning practices, and the most helpful activity; nay, stranger still, had been Kaiser Ottnit of *Lampartei* or Lombardy's father,—having had his own ulterior views in that indiscretion. How they sailed with Messina ships, into Paynim land; fought with that unspeakable Turk, King Machabol, in and about his fortress and metropolis of Montebur, which was all stuck round with christian heads; slew from seventy to a hundred thousand of the Infidels at one heat; saw the lady on the battlements; and at length, chiefly by Dwarf Elberich's help, carried her off in triumph; wedded her in Messina; and without difficulty, rooting out the Mahometan prejudice, converted her to the creed of Mother Church. The fair runaway seems to have been of a gentle tractable disposition, very different from old Machabol; concerning whom it is here chiefly to be noted that Dwarf Elberich, rendering himself invisible on their first interview, plucks out a handful of hair from his chin; thereby increasing to a tenfold pitch the royal choler; and, what is still more remarkable, furnishing the poet Wieland, six centuries afterwards, with the critical incident in his *Oberon*. As for the young lady herself, we

not but admit that she was well worth sailing to Heathendom ; and shall here, as our sole specimen of that old German gerel, give the description of her, as she first appeared on the tlements during the fight; subjoining a version as verbal and ral as the plainest prose can make it. Considered as a de-hed passage, it is perhaps the finest we have met with in the *ldenbuch.*

Ihr herz brann also schone,
Recht als ein rot rubein,
Gleich dem vollen mone
Gaben ihr äuglein schein.
Sich hett die maget reine
Mit rosen wohl bekleid
Und auch mit berlin kleine;
Niemand da tröst die meid.

Her heart burnt (with anxiety) as beautiful
Just as a red ruby,
Like the full moon
Her eyes (eyelings, pretty eyes) gave sheen.
Herself had the maiden pure
Well adorned with roses,
And also with pearls small:
No one there comforted the maid.

Sie war schön an dem leibe,
Und zu den seiten schmal;
Recht als ein kertze scheibe
Wohlgeschaffen überall:
Ihr beyden händ gemeine
Dars ihr gentz nichts gebrach;
Ihr näglein schön und reine,
Das man sich darin besach.

She was fair of body,
And in the waist slender;
Right as a (golden) candlestick
Well-fashioned everywhere:
Her two hands proper,
So that she wanted nought:
Her little nails fair and pure,
That you could see yourself therein.

Ihr har war schön umbfangen
Mit edler seiden fein;
Das liess sie nieder hangen,
Das hübsche magedlein.
Sie trug ein kron mit steinen,
Sie war von gold so rot;
Elberich dem viel kleinen
War zu der magte not.

Her hair was beautifully girt
With noble silk (band) fine;
She let it flow down,
The lovely maidling.
She wore a crown with jewels,
It was of gold so red:
For Elberich the very small
The maid had need (to console her).

Da vornen in den kronen
Lag ein karfunkelstein,
Der in dem pallast schonen
Aecht als ein kertz erschein;
Auf jrem haupt das hare
War lauter und auch fein,
Es leuchtet also klare
Recht als der sonnen schein.

There in front of the crown
Lay a carbuncle-stone,
Which in the palace fair
Even as a taper seemed;
On her head the hair
Was glossy and also fine,
It shone as bright
Even as the sun's sheen.

Die magt die stand alleine,
Gar trawrig war jr mut;
Ihr farb und die war reine,
Lieblich we milch und blut;
Her durch jr zöpffe reinen
Schien jr hals als der schnee:
Elberich dem viel kleinen
That der maget jammer weh.

The maid she stood alone,
Right sad was her mind;
Her colour it was pure,
Lovely as milk and blood:
Out through her pure locks
Shone her neck like the snow.
Elberich the very small
Was touched with the maiden's sorrow.

Happy man was Kaiser Ottnit, blessed with such a wife, after all his travail;—had not the Turk Machabol cunningly sent him, in revenge, a box of young Dragons, or Dragon-eggs, by the hands of a caitiff Infidel, contriver of the mischief; by whom in due course of time they were hatched and nursed, to the infinite woe of all Lampartei, and ultimately to the death of Kaiser Ottnit himself, whom they swallowed and attempted to digest, once without effect, but the next time too fatally, crown and all!

'*Part Second* announceth (*meldet*) of Herr Hugdietrich and his 'son Wolfdietrich; how they, for justice-sake, oft by their doughty 'acts succoured distressed persons, with other bold heroes that 'stood by them in extremity.'

Concerning which Hugdietrich, Emperor of Greece, and his son Wolfdietrich, one day the renowned Dietrich of Bern, we can here say little more than that the former trained himself to sempstress-work; and for many weeks plied his needle, before he could get wedded and produce Wolfdietrich; who coming into the world in this clandestine manner, was let down into the castle-ditch, and like Romulus and Remus nursed by a wolf, whence his name. However, after never-imagined adventures, with enchanters and enchantresses, pagans and giants, in all quarters of the globe, he finally, with utmost effort, slaughtered those Lombardy Dragons; then married Kaiser Ottnit's widow, whom he had rather flirted with before; and so lived universally respected in his new empire, performing yet other notable achievements. One strange property he had, sometimes useful to him, sometimes hurtful: that his breath, when he became angry, grew flame, red-hot, and would take the temper out of swords. We find him again in the *Nibelungen*, among King Etzel's (Attila's) followers; a staid, cautious, yet still invincible man; on which occasion, though with great reluctance, he is forced to interfere, and does so with effect.

Dietrich is the favourite hero of all those Southern Fictions, and well acknowledged in the Northern also, where the chief man, however, as we shall find, is not he but Siegfried.

'*Part Third* showeth of the Rose-garden at Worms, which was 'planted by Chrimhilte, King Gibich's daughter; whereby after-'wards most part of those Heroes and Giants came to destruction 'and were slain.'

In this Third Part the Southern or Lombard Heroes come into contact and collision with another as notable Northern class, and for us much more important. Chriemhild, whose ulterior history makes such a figure in the *Nibelungen*, had, it would seem, near the ancient city of Worms, a Rose-garden, some seven English miles in circuit; fenced only by a silk thread; wherein, however, she maintained Twelve stout fighting-men; several of whom, as Hagen, Volker, her three Brothers, above all the gallant Siegfried her betrothed, we shall meet with again: these, so unspeakable was their prowess, sufficed to defend the silk-thread Garden against all mortals. Our good antiquary, Von der Hagen, imagines that this Rose-garden business (in the primeval Tradition) glances obliquely at the Ecliptic with its Twelve Signs, at Jupiter's fight with the Titans, and we know not what confused skirmishing in the Utgard, or Asgard, or Midgard of the Scandinavians. Be this as it may, Chriemhild, we are here told, being very beautiful and very wilful, boasts, in the pride of her heart, that no heroes on earth are to be compared with hers; and hearing accidentally that Dietrich of Bern has a high character in this line, forthwith challenges him to visit Worms, and with eleven picked men to do battle there against those other Twelve champions of Christendom that watch her Rose-garden. Dietrich, in a towering passion at the style of the message, which was 'surly and stout,' instantly pitches upon his eleven seconds, who also are to be principals; and with a retinue of other sixty thousand, by quick stages, in which obstacles enough are overcome, reaches Worms, and declares himself ready. Among these eleven Lombard heroes of his are likewise several whom we meet with again in the *Nibelungen*; beside Dietrich himself, we have the old Duke Hildebrand, Wolfhart, Ortwin. Notable among them, in another way, is Monk Ilsan, a truculent gray-bearded fellow, equal to any Friar Tuck in *Robin Hood*.

The conditions of fight are soon agreed on: there are to be twelve successive duels, each challenger being expected to find his

match; and the prize of victory is a Rose-garland from Chriemhild, and *ein Helssen und ein Küssen*, that is to say virtually, one kiss from her fair lips to each. But here, as it ever should do, Pride gets a fall; for Chriemhild's bully-hectors are, in divers ways, all successively felled to the ground by the Berners; some of whom, as old Hildebrand, will not even take her Kiss when it is due: even Siegfried himself, most reluctantly engaged with by Dietrich, and for a while victorious, is at last forced to seek shelter in her lap. Nay, Monk Ilsan, after the regular fight is over, and his part in it well performed, calls out in succession fifty-two other idle Champions of the Garden, part of them Giants, and routs the whole fraternity; thereby earning, besides his own regular allowance, fifty-two spare Garlands, and fifty-two several Kisses; in the course of which latter, Chriemhild's cheek, a just punishment as seemed, was scratched to the drawing of blood by his rough beard. It only remains to be added, that King Gibich, Chriemhild's Father, is now fain to do homage for his kingdom to Dietrich; who returns triumphant to his own country; where also, Monk Ilsan, according to promise, distributes these fifty-two Garlands among his fellow Friars, crushing a garland on the bare crown of each, till 'the red blood ran over their ears.' Under which hard, but not undeserved treatment, they all agreed to pray for remission of Ilsan's sins: indeed, such as continued refractory he tied together by the beards, and hung pair-wise over poles; whereby the stoutest soon gave in.

So endeth here this ditty
Of strife from woman's pride:
God on our griefs take pity,
And Mary still by us abide.

'In *Part Fourth* is announced (*gemelt*) of the little King 'Laurin, the Dwarf, how he encompassed his Rose-garden with 'so great manhood and art-magic, till at last he was van-'quished by the heroes, and forced to become their Juggler, 'with &c. &c.'

Of which Fourth and happily last part we shall here say nothing; inasmuch as, except that certain of our old heroes again figure there, it has no coherence or connexion with the rest of the *Heldenbuch;* and is simply a new tale, which by way of episode Heinrich von Ofterdingen, as we learn from his own works, had subsequently appended thereto. He says:

Heinrich von Ofterdingen
This story hath been singing,
To the joy of Princes bold,
They gave him silver and gold,
Moreover pennies and garments rich:
Here endeth this Book the which
Doth sing our noble Heroes' story:
God help us all to heavenly glory.

Such is some outline of the famous *Heldenbuch;* on which it is not our business here to add any criticism. The fact that it has so long been popular betokens a certain worth in it; the kind and degree of which is also in some measure apparent. In poetry 'the rude man,' it has been said, 'requires only to see something 'going on; the man of more refinement wishes to feel; the truly 'refined man must be made to reflect.' For the first of these classes our *Hero-book*, as has been apparent enough, provides in abundance; for the other two scantily, indeed for the second not at all. Nevertheless our estimate of this work, which as a series of Antique Traditions may have considerable meaning, is apt rather to be too low. Let us remember that this is not the original *Heldenbuch* which we now see; but only a version of it into the Knight-errant dialect of the thirteenth, indeed partly of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, with all the fantastic monstrosities, now so trivial, pertaining to that style; under which disguises the really antique earnest groundwork, interesting as old Thought, if not as old Poetry, is all but quite obscured from us. But Antiquarian diligence is now busy with the *Heldenbuch* also, from which what light is in it will doubtless be elicited, and here and there a deformity removed. Though the Ethiop cannot change his skin, there is no need that even he should go abroad unwashed.[2]

Casper von Roen, or whoever was the ultimate redactor of the *Heldenbuch*, whom Lessing designates as 'a highly ill-informed man,' would have done better had he quite omitted that little

[2] Our inconsiderable knowledge of the *Heldenbuch* is derived from various secondary sources; chiefly from Lessing's *Werke* (b. xiii.), where the reader will find an epitome of the whole Poem, with Extracts by Herr Fülleborn, from which the above are taken. A still more accessible and larger Abstract, with long specimens translated into verse, stands in the *Illustrations of Northern Antiquities* (pp. 45-167). Von der Hagen has since been employed specially on the *Heldenbuch;* with what result we have not yet learned.

King Laurin, 'and his little Rose-garden,' which properly is no Rose-garden at all; and instead thereof introduced the *Gehörnte Siegfried* (Behorned Siegfried), whose history lies at the heart of the whole Northern Traditions; and, under a rude prose dress, is to this day a real child's-book and people's-book among the Germans. Of this Siegfried we have already seen somewhat in the Rose-garden at Worms; and shall ere long see much more elsewhere; for he is the chief hero of the *Nibelungen:* indeed nowhere can we dip into those old Fictions, whether in Scandinavia or the Rhine-land, but under one figure or another, whether as Dragon-killer and Prince-royal, or as Blacksmith and Horse-subduer, as Sigurd, Sivrit, Siegfried, we are sure to light on him. As his early adventures belong to the strange sort, and will afterwards concern us not a little, we shall here endeavour to piece together some consistent outline of them; so far indeed as that may be possible; for his biographers, agreeing in the main points, differ widely in the details.

First, then, let no one from the title *Gehörnte* (Horned, Behorned), fancy that our brave Siegfried, who was the loveliest as well as the bravest of men, was actually cornuted, and had horns on his brow, though like Michael Angelo's Moses; or even that his skin, to which the epithet *Behorned* refers, was hard like a crocodile's, and not softer than the softest shamoy: for the truth is, his Hornedness means only an Invulnerability, like that of Achilles; which he came by in the following manner. All men agree that Siegfried was a king's son; he was born, as we here have good reason to know, 'at Santen in Netherland,' of Siegemund and the fair Siegelinde; yet by some family misfortune or discord, of which the accounts are very various, he came into singular straits during boyhood; having passed that happy period of life, not under the canopies of costly state, but by the sooty stithy, in one Mimer a Blacksmith's shop. Here, however, he was nowise in his proper element; ever quarrelling with his fellow-apprentices; nay, as some say, breaking the hardest anvils into shivers by his too stout hammering. So that Mimer, otherwise a first-rate Smith, could by no means do with him there. He sends him, accordingly, to the neighbouring forest, to fetch charcoal; well aware that a monstrous Dragon, one Regin, the Smith's own Brother, would meet him and devour him. But far otherwise it proved; Siegfried by main force slew this Dragon, or rather Dragonised Smith's-Brother; made broth of him; and, warned by some significant

phenomena, bathed therein; or, as others assert, bathed directly in the monster's blood, without cookery; and hereby attained that Invulnerability, complete in all respects, save that between his shoulders, where a lime-tree leaf chanced to settle and stick during the process, there was one little spot, a fatal spot as afterwards turned out, left in its natural state.

Siegfried, now seeing through the craft of the Smith, returned home and slew him; then set forth in search of adventures, the bare catalogue of which were long to recite. We mention only two, as subsequently of moment both for him and for us. He is by some said to have courted, and then jilted, the fair and proud Queen Brunhild of Isenland; nay to have thrown down the seven gates of her Castle; and then ridden off with her wild horse Gana, having mounted him in the meadow, and instantly broken him. Some cross passages between him and Queen Brunhild, who understood no jesting, there must clearly have been, so angry is her recognition of him in the *Nibelungen;* nay, she bears a lasting grudge against him there; as he, and indeed she also, one day too sorely felt.

His other grand adventure is with the two sons of the deceased King Nibelung, in Nibelungen-land: these two youths, to whom their father had bequeathed a Hoard or Treasure, beyond all price or computation, Siegfried, 'riding by alone,' found on the side of a mountain, in a state of great perplexity. They had brought out the Treasure from the cave where it usually lay; but how to part it was the difficulty; for, not to speak of gold, there were as many jewels alone 'as twelve wagons in four days and nights, each going 'three journeys, could carry away;' nay, 'however much you took 'from it, there was no diminution:' besides, in real property, a Sword, Balmung, of great potency; a Divining-rod, 'which gave power over everyone;' and a *Tarnkappe* (or Cloak of Darkness), which not only rendered the wearer invisible, but also gave him twelve men's strength. So that the two Princes Royal, without counsel save from their Twelve stupid Giants, knew not how to fall upon any amicable arrangement; and, seeing Siegfried ride by so opportunely, requested him to be arbiter; offering also the Sword Balmung for his trouble. Siegfried, who readily undertook the impossible problem, did his best to accomplish it; but, of course, without effect; nay the two Nibelungen Princes, being of choleric temper, grew impatient, and provoked him; whereupon, with the Sword Balmung he slew them both, and their Twelve

Giants (perhaps originally Signs of the Zodiac) to boot. Thus did the famous *Nibelungen Hort* (Hoard), and indeed the whole Nibelungenland, come into his possession: wearing the Sword Balmung, and having slain the two Princes and their Champions, what was there farther to oppose him? Vainly did the Dwarf Alberich, our old friend Elberich of the *Heldenbuch*, who had now become special keeper of this Hoard, attempt some resistance with a Dwarf Army; he was driven back into the cave; plundered of his *Tarnkappe;* and obliged, with all his myrmidons, to swear fealty to the conqueror, whom indeed thenceforth he and they punctually obeyed.

Whereby Siegfried might now farther style himself King of the Nibelungen; master of the infinite Nibelungen Hoard (collected doubtless by art-magic in the beginning of Time, in the deep bowels of the Universe), with the *Wünschelruthe* (Wishing or Divining-rod) pertaining thereto; owner of the *Tarnkappe*, which he ever after kept by him, to put on at will; and though last not least, Bearer and Wielder of the Sword Balmung,[3] by the keen edge of which all this gain had come to him. To which last acquisitions

[3] By this Sword Balmung also hangs a tale. Doubtless it was one of those invaluable weapons sometimes fabricated by the old Northern Smiths, compared with which our modern Foxes and Ferraras and Toledos are mere leaden tools. Von der Hagen seems to think it simply the Sword Mimung under another name; in which case Siegfried's old master, Mimer, had been the maker of it, and called it after himself, as if it had been his son. In Scandinavian chronicles, veridical or not, we have the following account of that transaction. Mimer (or, as some have it, surely without ground, one Velint, once an apprentice of his) was challenged by another Craftsman, named Amilias, who boasted that he had made a suit of armour which no stroke could dint,—to equal that feat, or own himself the second Smith then extant. This last the stout Mimer would in no case do, but proceeded to forge the Sword Mimung; with which, when it was finished, he, 'in presence of the King,' cut asunder 'a thread of wool floating on water.' This would have seemed a fair fire-edge to most smiths: not so to Mimer; he sawed the blade in pieces, welded it in 'a red-hot fire for three days,' tempered it 'with milk and oatmeal,' and by much other cunning brought out a sword that severed 'a ball of wool floating on water.' But neither would this suffice him; he returned to his smithy, and by means known only to himself, produced, in the course of seven weeks, a third and final edition of Mimung, which split asunder a whole floating pack of wool. The comparative trial now took place forthwith. Amilias, cased in his impenetrable coat of mail, sat down on a bench, in presence of assembled thousands, and bade Mimer strike him. Mimer fetched of course his best blow, on which Amilias observed, that there was a strange feeling of cold iron in his inwards. "Shake thyself," said Mimer; the luckless wight did so, and fell in two halves, being cleft sheer through from collar to haunch, never more to swing hammer in this world. See *Illustrations of Northern Antiquities*, p. 31.

adding his previously acquired Invulnerability, and his natural dignities as Prince of Netherland, he might well show himself before the foremost at Worms or elsewhere; and attempt any the highest adventure that fortune could cut out for him. However, his subsequent history belongs all to the *Nibelungen Song;* at which fair garden of poesy we are now, through all these shaggy wildernesses and enchanted woods, finally arrived.

Apart from its antiquarian value, and not only as by far the finest monument of old German art; but intrinsically, and as a mere detached composition, this *Nibelungen* has an excellence that cannot but surprise us. With little preparation, any reader of poetry, even in these days, might find it interesting. It is not without a certain Unity of interest and purport, an internal coherence and completeness; it is a Whole, and some spirit of Music informs it: these are the highest characteristics of a true Poem. Considering farther what intellectual environment we now find it in, it is doubly to be prized and wondered at; for it differs from those *Hero-books*, as molten or carved metal does from rude agglomerated ore; almost as some Shakspeare from his fellow Dramatists, whose *Tamburlaines* and *Island Princesses*, themselves not destitute of merit, first show us clearly in what pure loftiness and loneliness the *Hamlets* and *Tempests* reign.

The unknown Singer of the *Nibelungen*, though no Shakspeare, must have had a deep poetic soul; wherein things discontinuous and inanimate shaped themselves together into life, and the Universe with its wondrous purport stood significantly imaged; overarching, as with heavenly firmaments and eternal harmonies, the little scene where men strut and fret their hour. His Poem, unlike so many old and new pretenders to that name, has a basis and organic structure, a beginning, middle and end; there is one great principle and idea set forth in it, round which all its multifarious parts combine in living union. Remarkable it is, moreover, how along with this essence and primary condition of all poetic virtue, the minor external virtues of what we call Taste and so forth, are, as it were, presupposed; and the living soul of Poetry being there, its body of incidents, its garment of language, come of their own accord. So too in the case of Shakspeare: his feeling of propriety, as compared with that of the Marlowes and Fletchers, his quick sure sense of what is fit and unfit, either in act or word, might astonish us, had he no other superiority. But true Inspira-

tion, as it may well do, includes that same Taste, or rather a far higher and heartfelt Taste, of which that other 'elegant' species is but an ineffectual, irrational apery: let us see the herald Mercury actually descend from his Heaven, and the bright wings, and the graceful movement of these, will not be wanting.

With an instinctive art, far different from acquired artifice, this Poet of the *Nibelungen*, working in the same province with his contemporaries of the *Heldenbuch*, on the same material of tradition, has, in a wonderful degree, possessed himself of what these could only strive after; and with his 'clear feeling of fictitious truth,' avoided as false the errors and monstrous perplexities in which they vainly struggled. He is of another species than they; in language, in purity and depth of feeling, in fineness of invention, stands quite apart from them.

The language of the *Heldenbuch*, as we saw above, was a feeble half-articulate child's-speech, the metre nothing better than a miserable doggerel; whereas here in the old Frankish (*Oberdeutsch*) dialect of the *Nibelungen*, we have a clear decisive utterance, and in a real system of verse, not without essential regularity, great liveliness, and now and then even harmony of rhythm. Doubtless we must often call it a diffuse diluted utterance; at the same time it is genuine, with a certain antique garrulous heartiness, and has a rhythm in the thoughts as well as the words. The simplicity is never silly: even in that perpetual recurrence of epithets, sometimes of rhymes, as where two words, for instance *lip* (body, life, *leib*) and *wip* (woman, wife, *weib*) are indissolubly wedded together, and the one never shows itself without the other following,—there is something which reminds us not so much of poverty, as of trustfulness and childlike innocence. Indeed a strange charm lies in those old tones, where, in gay dancing melodies, the sternest tidings are sung to us; and deep floods of Sadness and Strife play lightly in little curling billows, like seas in summer. It is as a meek smile, in whose still, thoughtful depths a whole infinitude of patience, and love, and heroic strength lie revealed. But in other cases too, we have seen this outward sport and inward earnestness offer grateful contrast, and cunning excitement; for example, in Tasso; of whom, though otherwise different enough, this old Northern Singer has more than once reminded us. There too, as here, we have a dark solemn meaning in light guise; deeds of high temper, harsh self-denial, daring and death, stand embodied in that soft, quick-flowing, joyfully-modulated verse. Nay farther,

as if the implement, much more than we might fancy, had influenced the work done, these two Poems, could we trust our individual feeling, have in one respect the same poetical result for us: in the *Nibelungen* as in the *Gerusalemme*, the persons and their story are indeed brought vividly before us, yet not near and palpably present; it is rather as if we looked on that scene through an inverted telescope, whereby the whole was carried far away into the distance, the life-large figures compressed into brilliant miniatures, so clear, so real, yet tiny, elf-like and beautified as well as lessened, their colours being now closer and brighter, the shadows and trivial features no longer visible. This, as we partly apprehend, comes of *singing* Epic Poems; most part of which only pretend to be sung. Tasso's rich melody still lives among the Italian people; the *Nibelungen* also is what it professes to be, a *Song*.

No less striking than the verse and language is the quality of the invention manifested here. Of the Fable, or narrative material of the *Nibelungen* we should say that it had high, almost the highest merit; so daintily yet firmly is it put together; with such felicitous selection of the beautiful, the essential, and no less felicitous rejection of whatever was unbeautiful or even extraneous. The reader is no longer afflicted with that chaotic brood of Firedrakes, Giants, and malicious turbaned Turks, so fatally rife in the *Heldenbuch:* all this is swept away, or only hovers in faint shadows afar off; and free field is open for legitimate perennial interests. Yet neither is the *Nibelungen* without its wonders; for it is poetry and not prose; here too, a supernatural world encompasses the natural, and, though at rare intervals and in calm manner, reveals itself there. It is truly wonderful, with what skill our simple untaught Poet deals with the marvellous; admitting it without reluctance or criticism, yet precisely in the degree and shape that will best avail him. Here, if in no other respect, we should say that he has a decided superiority to Homer himself. The whole story of the *Nibelungen* is fateful, mysterious, guided on by unseen influences; yet the actual marvels are few, and done in the far distance; those Dwarfs, and Cloaks of Darkness, and charmed Treasure-caves, are heard of rather than beheld, the tidings of them seem to issue from unknown space. Vain were it to inquire where that Nibelungen-land specially is: its very name is *Nebelland* or *Nifl-land*, the land of Darkness, of Invisibility. The 'Nibelungen Heroes' that muster in thousands and tens of thousands, though they march to the Rhine or Danube, and we see

their strong limbs and shining armour, we could almos fancy to be children of the air. Far beyond the firm horizon, that wonder-bearing region swims on the infinite waters; unseen by bodily eye, or at most discerned as a faint streak, hanging in the blue depths, uncertain whether island or cloud. And thus the *Nibelungen Song*, though based on the bottomless foundations of Spirit, and not unvisited of skyey messengers, is a real, rounded, habitable Earth, where we find firm footing, and the wondrous and the common live amicably together. Perhaps it would be difficult to find any Poet of ancient or modern times, who in this trying problem has steered his way with greater delicacy and success.

To any of our readers who may have personally studied the *Nibelungen*, these high praises of ours will not seem exaggerated: the rest, who are the vast majority, must endeavour to accept them with some degree of faith, at least of curiosity; to vindicate, and judicially substantiate them would far exceed our present opportunities. Nay in any case, the criticism, the alleged Characteristics of a Poem are so many Theorems, which are indeed enunciated, truly or falsely, but the Demonstration of which must be sought for in the reader's own study and experience. Nearly all that can be attempted here, is some hasty epitome of the mere Narrative; no substantial image of the work, but a feeble outline and shadow. To which task, as the personages and their environment have already been in some degree illustrated, we can now proceed without obstacle.

The *Nibelungen* has been called the Northern Epos; yet it has, in great part, a Dramatic character: those thirty-nine *Aventiuren* (Adventures), which it consists of, might be so many scenes in a Tragedy. The catastrophe is dimly prophesied from the beginning; and, at every fresh step, rises more and more clearly into view. A shadow of coming Fate, as it were, a low inarticulate voice of Doom falls, from the first, out of that charmed Nibelungen-land: the discord of two women is as a little spark of evil passion, which ere long enlarges itself into a crime; foul murder is done; and now the Sin rolls on like a devouring fire, till the guilty and the innocent are alike encircled with it, and a whole land is ashes, and a whole race is swept away.

Uns ist in alten mæren Wunders vil geseit,
Von helden lobebæren Von grozer chuonheit,
Von vroulen und' hoch-geziten, Von weinen und von chlagen,
Von chuner rechen striten, Muget ir nu wunder hören sagen.

We find in ancient story Wonders many told,
Of heroes in great glory With spirit free and bold;
Of joyances and high-tides, Of weeping and of woe,
Of noble Recken striving, Mote ye now wonders know.

This is the brief artless Proem; and the promise contained in it proceeds directly towards fulfilment. In the very second stanza we learn:

Es wühs in Burgonden Ein vil edel magedin,
Das in allen landen Nüht schoners mohte sin;
Chriemhilt was si geheien, Si wart ein schone wip;
Darumbe müsen degene Vil verliesen den lip.

A right noble maiden Did grow in Burgundy,
That in all lands of earth Nought fairer mote there be;
Chriemhild of Worms she hight, She was a fairest *wife;*
For the which must warriors A many lose their life.[4]

Chriemhild, this world's-wonder, a king's daughter and king's sister, and no less coy and proud than fair, dreams one night that 'she had petted a falcon, strong, beautiful and wild; which two 'eagles snatched away from her: this she was forced to see; 'greater sorrow felt she never in the world.' Her mother, Ute, to whom she relates the vision, soon redes it for her; the falcon is a noble husband, whom, God keep him, she must suddenly lose. Chriemhild declares warmly for the single state; as, indeed, living there at the Court of Worms, with her brothers, Gunther, Gernot, Geiselher, 'three kings noble and rich,' in such pomp and renown, the pride of Burgunden-land and Earth, she might readily enough have changed for the worse. However, dame Ute bids her not be too emphatical; for 'if ever she have heartfelt joy in life, it will be 'from man's love, and she shall be a fair wife (*wip*), when God

[4] This is the first of a thousand instances in which the two inseparables, *wip* and *lip*, or in modern tongue *weib* and *leib*, as mentioned above, appear together. From these two opening stanzas of the *Nibelungen Lied*, in its purest form, the reader may obtain some idea of the versification; it runs on in more or less regular Alexandrines, with a cæsural pause in each, where the capital letter occurs; indeed, the lines seem originally to have been divided into two at that point, for sometimes, as in Stanza First, the middle words (*mæren lobebæren; geziten, striten*) also rhyme; but this is rather a rare case. The word *rechen* or *recken*, used in the First Stanza, is the constant designation for bold fighters, and has the same root with *rich* (thus in old French, *hommes riches;* in Spanish, *ricos hombres*), which last is here also synonymous with *powerful*, and is applied to kings, and even to the Almighty, *Got dem richen*.

'sends her a right worthy Ritter's *lip*.' Chriemhild is more in earnest than maidens usually are when they talk thus; it appears, she guarded against love, 'for many a lief-long day;' nevertheless, she too must yield to destiny. 'Honourably she was to become a 'most noble Ritter's wife.' 'This,' adds the old Singer, 'was that 'same falcon she dreamed of: how sorely she since revenged him 'on her nearest kindred! For that one death died full many a 'mother's son.'

It may be observed, that the Poet here, and at all times, shows a marked partiality for Chriemhild; ever striving, unlike his fellow-singers, to magnify her worth, her faithfulness and loveliness; and softening, as much as may be, whatever makes against her. No less a favourite with him is Siegfried, the prompt, gay, peaceably fearless hero; to whom, in the Second *Aventiure*, we are here suddenly introduced, at Santen (Xanten), the Court of Netherland; whither, to his glad parents, after achievements (to us partially known) 'of which one might sing and tell forever,' that noble prince has returned. Much as he has done and conquered, he is but just arrived at man's years: it is on occasion of this joyful event that a high-tide (*hochgezit*) is now held there, with infinite joustings, minstrelsy, largesses and other chivalrous doings, all which is sung with utmost heartiness. The old King Siegemund offers to resign his crown to him; but Siegfried has other game a-field: the unparalleled beauty of Chriemhild has reached his ear and his fancy; and now he will to Worms and woo her, at least 'see how it stands with her.' Fruitless is it for Siegemund and the mother Siegelinde to represent the perils of that enterprise, the pride of those Burgundian Gunthers and Gernots, the fierce temper of their uncle Hagen; Siegfried is as obstinate as young men are in these cases, and can hear no counsel. Nay he will not accept the much more liberal proposition, to take an army with him, and conquer the country, if it must be so; he will ride forth, like himself, with twelve champions only, and so defy the future. Whereupon, the old people finding that there is no other course, proceed to make him clothes;[5]—at least, the good queen with 'her fair women sitting night and day,' and sewing, does so, the father furnishing noblest battle and riding gear;—and so dismiss him with many blessings and lamentations. 'For him 'wept sore the king and his *wife*, but he comforted both their

[5] This is a never-failing preparative for all expeditions, and always specified and insisted on with a simple, loving, almost female impressiveness.

'bodies (*lip*); he said, "Ye must not weep, for my body ever shall 'ye be without care."'

Sad was it to the Recken, Stood weeping many a mail;
I ween their heart had them The tidings true foresaid,
That of their friends so many Death thereby should find;
Cause had they of lamenting, Such boding in their mind.

Nevertheless, on the seventh morning, that adventureus company 'ride up the sand,' on the Rhinebeach, to Worms; in high temper, in dress and trappings, aspect and bearing more than kingly.

Siegfried's reception at King Gunther's court, and his brave sayings and doings there for some time, we must omit. One fine trait of his chivalrous delicacy it is that, for a whole year, he never hints at his errand; never once sees or speaks of Chriemhild, whom, nevertheless, he is longing day and night to meet. She, on her side, has often through her lattices noticed the gallant stranger, victorious in all tiltings and knightly exercises; whereby it would seem, in spite of her rigorous predeterminations, some kindness for him is already gliding in. Meanwhile, mighty wars and threats of invasion arise, and Siegfried does the state good service. Returning victorious, both as general and soldier, from Hessen (Hessia), where, by help of his own courage and the sword Balmung, he has captured a Danish king, and utterly discomfited a Saxon one; he can now show himself before Chriemhild without other blushes than those of timid love. Nay the maiden has herself inquired pointedly of the messengers, touching his exploits; and 'her fair face grew rose-red when she heard them.' A gay High-tide, by way of triumph, is appointed; several kings, and two-and-thirty princes, and knights enough with 'gold-red saddles,' come to joust; and better than whole infinities of kings and princes with their saddles, the fair Chriemhild herself, under guidance of her mother, chiefly too in honour of the victor, is to grace that sport. 'Ute the full rich' fails not to set her needle-women to work, and 'clothes of price are taken from their presses,' for the love of her child, 'wherewith to deck many women and maids.' And now, 'on the Whitsun-morning,' all is ready, and glorious as heart could desire it; brave Ritters, 'five thousand or more,' all glancing in the lists; but grander still, Chriemhild herself is advancing beside her mother, with a hundred body-guards, all sword-in-hand, and many a noble maid 'wearing rich raiment,' in her train!

'Now issued forth the lovely one (*minnechliche*), as the red morning doth from troubled clouds; much care fled away from him who bore her in his heart, and long had done; he saw the lovely one stand in her beauty.

'There glanced from her garments full many precious stones, her rose-red colour shone full lovely: try what he might, each man must confess that in this world he had not seen aught so fair.

'Like as the light moon stands before the stars, and its sheen so clear goes over the clouds, even so stood she now before many fair women; whereat cheered was the mind of the hero.

'The rich chamberlains you saw go before her, the high-spirited Recken would not forbear, but pressed on where they saw the lovely maiden. Siegfried the lord was both glad and sad.

'He thought in his mind, How could this be that I should woo thee? That was a foolish dream; yet must I forever be a stranger, I were rather (*sanfter*, softer) dead. He became, from these thoughts, in quick changes, pale and red.

'Thus stood so lovely the child of Siegelinde, as if he were limned on parchment by a master's art; for all granted that hero so beautiful they had never seen.'

In this passage, which we have rendered, from the Fifth *Aventiure*, into the closest prose, it is to be remarked, among other singularities, that there are two similes: in which figure of speech our old Singer deals very sparingly. The first, that comparison of Chriemhild to the moon among stars with its sheen going over the clouds, has now for many centuries had little novelty or merit: but the second, that of Siegfried to a Figure in some illuminated Manuscript, is graceful in itself; and unspeakably so to antiquaries, seldom honoured, in their Black-letter stubbing and grubbing, with such a poetic windfall!

A prince and a princess of this quality are clearly made for one another. Nay, on the motion of young Herr Gernot, fair Chriemhild is bid specially to salute Siegfried, she who had never before saluted man; which unparalleled grace the lovely one, in all courtliness, openly does him. "Be welcome," said she, "Herr Siegfried, a noble Ritter good;" from which salute, for this seems to have been all, 'much raised was his mind.' He bowed with graceful reverence, as his manner was with women; she took him by the hand, and with fond stolen glances they looked at each other. Whether in that ceremonial joining of hands there might not be some soft, slight pressure, of far deeper import, is what

our Singer will not take upon him to say; however, he thinks the affirmative more probable. Henceforth, in that bright May weather, the two were seen constantly together: nothing but felicity around and before them.—In these days, truly, it must have been that the famous Prize-fight, with Dietrich of Bern and his Eleven Lombardy champions, took place, little to the profit of the two Lovers; were it not rather that the whole of that Rose-garden transaction, as given in the *Heldenbuch*, might be falsified and even imaginary; for no mention or hint of it occurs here. War or battle is not heard of; Siegfried the peerless walks wooingly by the side of Chriemhild the peerless; matters, it is evident, are in the best possible course.

But now comes a new side-wind, which, however, in the long-run also forwards the voyage. Tidings, namely, reached over the Rhine, not so surprising we might hope, 'that there was many a fair maiden;' whereupon Gunther the King 'thought with himself to win one of them.' It was an honest purpose in King Gunther, only his choice was not the discreetest. For no fair maiden will content him but Queen Brunhild, a lady who rules in *Isenland*, far over sea, famed indeed for her beauty, yet no less so for her caprices. Fables we have met with of this Brunhild being properly a *Valkyr*, or Scandinavian Houri, such as were wont to lead old northern warriors from their last battle-field into Valhalla; and that her castle of *Isenstein* stood amidst a lake of fire: but this, as we said, is fable and groundless calumny, of which there is not so much as notice taken here. Brunhild, it is plain enough, was a flesh-and-blood maiden, glorious in look and faculty, only with some preternatural talents given her, and the strangest wayward habits. It appears, for example, that any suitor proposing for her has this brief condition to proceed upon: he must try the adorable in the three several games of hurling the Spear (at one another), Leaping, and throwing the Stone: if victorious, he gains her hand; if vanquished, he loses his own head; which latter issue, such is the fair Amazon's strength, frequent fatal experiment has shown to be the only probable one.

Siegfried, who knows something of Brunhild and her ways, votes clearly against the whole enterprise; however, Gunther has once for all got the whim in him, and must see it out. The prudent Hagen von Troneg, uncle to love-sick Gunther, and ever true to him, then advises that Siegfried be requested to take part in the adventure; to which request Siegfried readily accedes on one

condition: that, should they prove fortunate, he himself is to have Chriemhild to wife when they return. This readily settled, he now takes charge of the business, and throws a little light on it for the others. They must lead no army thither; only two, Hagen and Dankwart, besides the king and himself, shall go. The grand subject of *waete*[6] (clothes) is next hinted at, and in general terms elucidated; whereupon a solemn consultation with Chriemhild ensues; and a great cutting-out, on her part, of white silk from Araby, of green silk from Zazemang, of strange fish-skins covered with morocco silk; a great sewing thereof for seven weeks, on the part of her maids; lastly, a fitting-on of the three suits by each hero, for each had three; and heartiest thanks in return, seeing all fitted perfectly, and was of grace and price unutterable. What is still more to the point, Siegfried takes his Cloak of Darkness with him, fancying he may need it there. The good old Singer, who has hitherto alluded only in the faintest way to Siegfried's prior adventures and miraculous possessions, introduces this of the *Tarnkappe* with great frankness and simplicity. 'Of 'wild dwarfs (*getwergen*),' says he, 'I have heard tell, they are in 'hollow mountains, and for defence wear somewhat called *Tarn-'kappe*, of wondrous sort;' the qualities of which garment, that it renders invisible, and gives twelve men's strength, are already known to us.

The voyage to Isenstein, Siegfried steering the ship thither, is happily accomplished in twenty days. Gunther admires to a high degree the fine masonry of the place; as indeed he well might, there being some eighty-six towers, three immense palaces and one immense hall, the whole built of 'marble green as grass;' farther he sees many fair women looking from the windows down on the bark, and thinks the loveliest is she in the snow-white dress; which, Siegfried informs him, is a worthy choice; the snow-white maiden being no other than Brunhild. It is also to be kept in mind that Siegfried, for reasons known best to himself, had previously stipulated that, though a free king, they should all treat him as vassal of Gunther, for whom accordingly he holds the stirrup, as they mount on the beach; thereby giving rise to a misconception, which in the end led to saddest consequences.

Queen Brunhild, who had called back her maidens from the windows, being a strict disciplinarian, and retired into the interior

[6] Hence our English *weeds*, and Scotch *wad* (pledge); and, say the etymologists, *wadding*, and even *wedding*.

of her green marble Isenstein, to dress still better, now inquires of some attendant, Who these strangers of such lordly aspect are, and what brings them? The attendant professes himself at a loss to say; one of them looks like Siegfried, the other is evidently by his port a noble king. His notice of Von Troneg Hagen is peculiarly vivid:

> The third of those companions He is of aspect stern,
> And yet with lovely body, Rich queen, as ye might discern;
> From those *his rapid glances*, For the eyes nought rest in him,
> Meseems this foreign Recke Is of temper fierce and grim.

This is one of those little graphic touches, scattered all over our Poem, which do more for picturing out an object, especially a man, than whole pages of enumeration and mensuration. Never after do we hear of this stout indomitable Hagen, in all the wild deeds and sufferings he passes through, but those *swinden blicken* of his come before us, with the restless, deep, dauntless spirit that looks through them.

Brunhild's reception of Siegfried is not without tartness; which, however, he, with polished courtesy and the nimblest address, ever at his command, softens down, or hurries over: he is here, without will of his own, and so forth, only as attendant on his master, the renowned King Gunther, who comes to sue for her hand, as the summit and keystone of all earthly blessings. Brunhild, who had determined on fighting Siegfried himself, if so he willed it, makes small account of this King Gunther or his prowess; and instantly clears the ground, and equips her for battle. The royal wooer must have looked a little blank when he saw a shield brought in for his fair one's handling, 'three spans thick with gold and iron,' which four chamberlains could hardly bear, and a spear or javelin she meant to shoot or hurl, which was a burden for three. Hagen, in angry apprehension for his king and nephew, exclaims that they shall all lose their life (*lip*), and that she is the *tiuvels wip*, or Devil's wife. Nevertheless Siegfried is already there in his Cloak of Darkness, twelve men strong, and privily whispers in the ear of royalty to be of comfort; takes the shield to himself, Gunther only affecting to hold it, and so fronts the edge of battle. Brunhild performs prodigies of spear-hurling, of leaping, and stone-pitching; but Gunther, or rather Siegfried, 'who does the work, he only acting the gestures,' nay who even snatches him up into the air, and leaps carrying him,—gains a

decided victory, and the lovely Amazon must own with surprise and shame that she is fairly won. Siegfried presently appears without *Tarnkappe*, and asks with a grave face, When the games, then, are to begin?

So far well; yet somewhat still remains to be done. Brunhild will not sail for Worms, to be wedded, till she have assembled a fit train of warriors: wherein the Burgundians, being here without retinue, see symptoms or possibilities of mischief. The deft Siegfried, ablest of men, again knows a resource. In his *Tarnkappe* he steps on board the bark, which seen from the shore, appears to drift-off of its own accord; and therein, stoutly steering towards *Nibelungen-land*, he reaches that mysterious country and the mountain where his Hoard lies, before the second morning; finds Dwarf Alberich and all his giant sentinels at their post, and faithful almost to the death; these soon rouse him thirty thousand Nibelungen Recken, from whom he has only to choose one thousand of the best; equip them splendidly enough; and therewith return to Gunther, simply as if they were that sovereign's own bodyguard, that had been delayed a little by stress of weather.

The final arrival at Worms; the bridal feasts, for there are two, Siegfried also receiving his reward; and the joyance and splendour of man and maid, at this lordliest of high-tides; and the joustings, greater than those at Aspramont or Montauban,—every reader can fancy for himself. Remarkable only is the evil eye with which Queen Brunhild still continues to regard the noble Siegfried. She cannot understand how Gunther, the Landlord of the Rhine,[1] should have bestowed his sister on a vassal: the assurance that Siegfried also is a prince and heir-apparent, the prince namely of Netherland, and little inferior to Burgundian majesty itself, yields no complete satisfaction; and Brunhild hints plainly that, unless the truth be told her, unpleasant consequences may follow. Thus is there ever a ravelled thread in the web of life! But for this little cloud of spleen, these bridal feasts had been all bright and balmy as the month of June. Unluckily too, the cloud is an electric one; spreads itself in time into a general earthquake; nay that very night becomes a thunder-storm, or tornado, unparalleled we may hope in the annals of connubial happiness.

The Singer of the *Nibelungen*, unlike the author of *Roderick*

[1] *Der Wirt von Rine:* singular enough, the word *Wirth*, often applied to royalty in that old dialect, is now also the title of innkeepers. To such base uses may we come.

Random, cares little for intermeddling with 'the chaste mysteries of Hymen.' Could we, in the corrupt ambiguous modern tongue, hope to exhibit any shadow of the old simple, true-hearted, merely historical spirit, with which, in perfect purity of soul, he describes things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme,—we could a tale unfold! Suffice it to say, King Gunther, Landlord of the Rhine, falling sheer down from the third heaven of hope, finds his spouse the most athletic and intractable of women; and himself, at the close of the adventure, nowise encircled in her arms, but tied hard and fast, hand and foot, in her girdle, and hung thereby, at considerable elevation, on a nail in the wall. Let any reader of sensibility figure the emotions of the royal breast, there as he vibrates suspended on his peg, and his inexorable bride sleeping sound in her bed below! Towards morning he capitulates; engaging to observe the prescribed line of conduct with utmost strictness, so he may but avoid becoming a laughing-stock to all men.

No wonder the dread king looked rather grave next morning, and received the congratulations of mankind in a cold manner. He confesses to Siegfried, who partly suspects how it may be, that he has brought the 'evil devil' home to his house in the shape of wife, whereby he is wretched enough. However, there are remedies for all things but death. The ever-serviceable Siegfried undertakes even here to make the crooked straight. What may not an honest friend with Tarnkappe and twelve men's strength perform? Proud Brunhild, next night, after a fierce contest, owns herself again vanquished; Gunther is there to reap the fruits of another's victory; the noble Siegfried withdraws, taking nothing with him but the luxury of doing good, and the proud queen's Ring and Girdle gained from her in that struggle; which small trophies he, with the last infirmity of a noble mind, presents to his own fond wife, little dreaming that they would one day cost him and her, and all of them, so dear. Such readers as take any interest in poor Gunther will be gratified to learn, that from this hour Brunhild's preternatural faculties quite left her, being all dependent on her maidhood; so that any more spear-hurling, or other the like extraordinary work, is not to be apprehended from her.

If we add, that Siegfried formally made over to his dear Chriemhild the Nibelungen Hoard, by way of *Morgengabe* (or, as we may say, Jointure); and the high-tide, though not the honeymoon being past, returned to Netherland with his spouse, to be

welcomed there with infinite rejoicings,—we have gone through as it were the First Act of this Tragedy; and may here pause to look round us for a moment. The main characters are now introduced on the scene, the relations that bind them together are dimly sketched out: there is the prompt, cheerfully heroic, invulnerable and invincible Siegfried, now happiest of men; the high Chriemhild, fitly-mated, and if a moon, revolving glorious round her sun, or *Friedel* (joy and darling); not without pride and female aspirings, yet not prouder than one so gifted and placed is pardonable for being. On the other hand, we have King Gunther, or rather let us say king's-mantle Gunther, for never except in that one enterprise of courting Brunhild, in which too, without help, he would have cut so poor a figure, does the worthy sovereign show will of his own, or character other than that of good potter's clay; farther, the suspicious, forecasting, yet stout and reckless Hagen, him with the *rapid glances*, and these turned not too kindly on Siegfried, whose prowess he has used yet dreads, whose Nibelungen Hoard he perhaps already covets; lastly, the rigorous and vigorous Brunhild, of whom also more is to be feared than hoped. Considering the fierce nature of these now mingled ingredients; and how, except perhaps in the case of Gunther, there is no menstruum of placid stupidity to soften them; except in Siegfried, no element of heroic truth to master them and bind them together,—unquiet fermentation may readily be apprehended.

Meanwhile, for a season all is peace and sunshine. Siegfried reigns in Netherland, of which his father has surrendered him the crown; Chriemhild brings him a son, whom in honour of the uncle he christens Gunther, which courtesy the uncle and Brunhild repay in kind. The Nibelungen Hoard is still open and inexhaustible; Dwarf Alberich and all the Recken there still loyal; outward relations friendly, internal supremely prosperous: these are halcyon days. But, alas, they cannot last. Queen Brunhild, retaining with true female tenacity her first notion, right or wrong, reflects one day that Siegfried, who is and shall be nothing but her husband's vassal, has for a long while paid him no service; and, determined on a remedy, manages that Siegfried and his queen shall be invited to a high-tide at Worms, where opportunity may chance for enforcing that claim. Thither accordingly, after ten years' absence, we find these illustrious guests returning; Siegfried escorted by a thousand Nibelungen Ritters, and farther by his father Siegemund who leads a train of Netherlanders. Here for

eleven days, amid infinite joustings, there is a true heaven-on-earth: but the apple of discord is already lying in the knightly ring, and two Women, the proudest and keenest-tempered of the world, simultaneously stoop to lift it. *Aventiure* Fourteenth is entitled 'How the two queens rated one another.' Never was courtlier Billingsgate uttered, or which came more directly home to the business and bosoms of women. The subject is that old story of Precedence, which indeed, from the time of Cain and Abel downwards, has wrought such effusion of blood and bile both among men and women; lying at the bottom of all armaments and battle-fields, whether Blenheims and Waterloos, or only plate-displays, and tongue-and-eye skirmishes, in the circle of domestic Tea: nay, the very animals have it; and horses, were they but the miserablest Shelties and Welsh ponies, will not graze together till it has been ascertained, by clear fight, who is master of whom, and a proper drawing-room etiquette established.

Brunhild and Chriemhild take to arguing about the merits of their husbands: the latter, fondly expatiating on the preëminence of her *Friedel*, how he walks 'like the moon among stars' before all other men, is reminded by her sister that one man at least must be excepted, the mighty King Gunther of Worms, to whom by his own confession long ago at Isenstein, he is vassal and servant. Chriemhild will sooner admit that clay is above sunbeams, than any such proposition; which therefore she, in all politeness, requests of her sister never more to touch upon while she lives. The result may be foreseen: rejoinder follows reply, statement grows assertion; flint-sparks have fallen on the dry flax, which from smoke bursts into conflagration. The two queens part in hottest, though still clear-flaming anger. Not, however, to let their anger burn out, but only to feed it with more solid fuel. Chriemhild dresses her forty maids in finer than royal apparel; orders out all her husband's Recken; and so attended, walks foremost to the Minster, where mass is to be said; thus practically asserting that she is not only a true queen, but the worthier of the two. Brunhild, quite outdone in splendour, and enraged beyond all patience, overtakes her at the door of the Minster, with peremptory order to stop: "before king's wife shall vassal's never go."

Then said the fair Chriemhilde, Right angry was her mood:
" Couldest thou but hold thy peace, It were surely for thy good;
Thyself hast all polluted With shame thy fair bodye;
How can a Concubine By right a King's wife be?"

"Whom hast thou Concubined?" The King's wife quickly spake;
"That do I thee," said Chriemhild; "For thy pride and vaunting's sake;
Who first had thy fair body Was Siegfried my beloved Man;
My Brother it was not That thy maidhood from thee wan."

In proof of which outrageous saying, she produces that Ring and Girdle; the innocent conquest of which, as we well know, has a far other origin. Brunhild burst into tears; 'sadder day she never saw.' Nay, perhaps a new light now rose on her over much that had been dark in her late history; 'she rued full sore that ever she was born.'

Here, then, is the black injury, which only blood will wash away. The evil fiend has begun his work; and the issue of it lies beyond man's control. Siegfried may protest his innocence of that calumny, and chastise his indiscreet spouse for uttering it even in the heat of anger: the female heart is wounded beyond healing; the old springs of bitterness against this hero unite into a fell flood of hate; while he sees the sunlight, she cannot know a joyful hour. Vengeance is soon offered her: Hagen, who lives only for his prince, undertakes this bad service; by treacherous professions of attachment, and anxiety to guard Siegfried's life, he gains from Chriemhild the secret of his vulnerability; Siegfried is carried out to hunt; and in the hour of frankest gaiety is stabbed through the fatal spot; and, felling the murderer to the ground, dies upbraiding his false kindred, yet, with a touching simplicity, recommending his child and wife to their protection. '"Let her feel that she is your sister; was there ever virtue in 'princes, be true to her: for me my Father and my men shall long 'wait." The flowers all around were wetted with blood, then he 'struggled with death; not long did he this, the weapon cut him 'too keen; so he could speak nought more, the Recke bold and 'noble.'

At this point, we might say, ends the Third Act of our Tragedy; the whole story henceforth takes a darker character; it is as if a tone of sorrow and fateful boding became more and more audible in its free light music. Evil has produced new evil in fatal augmentation: injury is abolished; but in its stead there is guilt and despair. Chriemhild, an hour ago so rich, is now robbed of all: her grief is boundless as her love has been. No glad thought can ever more dwell in her; darkness, utter night has come over

her, as she looked into the red of morning. The spoiler too walks abroad unpunished; the bleeding corpse witnesses against Hagen, nay he himself cares not to hide the deed. But who is there to avenge the friendless? Siegfried's Father has returned in haste to his own land; Chriemhild is now alone on the earth, her husband's grave is all that remains to her; there only can she sit, as if waiting at the threshold of her own dark home; and in prayers and tears pour out the sorrow and love that have no end. Still farther injuries are heaped on her: by advice of the crafty Hagen, Gunther, who had not planned the murder, yet permitted and witnessed it, now comes with whining professions of repentance and good-will; persuades her to send for the Nibelungen Hoard to Worms; where no sooner is it arrived, than Hagen and the rest forcibly take it from her; and her last trust in affection or truth from mortal is rudely cut away. Bent to the earth, she weeps only for her lost Siegfried, knows no comfort, but will weep forever.

One lurid gleam of hope, after long years of darkness, breaks in on her, in the prospect of revenge. King Etzel sends from his far country to solicit her hand: the embassy she hears at first, as a woman of ice might do; the good Rudiger, Etzel's spokesman, pleads in vain that his king is the richest of all earthly kings; that he is so lonely 'since Frau Helke died;' that though a heathen, he has Christians about him, and may one day be converted: till at length, when he hints distantly at the power of Etzel to avenge her injuries, she on a sudden becomes all attention. Hagen, foreseeing such possibilities, protests against the match; but is overruled: Chriemhild departs with Rudiger for the land of the Huns; taking cold leave of her relations; only two of whom, her brothers Gernot and Giselher, innocent of that murder, does she admit near her as convoy to the Donau.

The Nibelungen Hoard has hitherto been fatal to all its possessors; to the two sons of Nibelung; to Siegfried its conqueror: neither does the Burgundian Royal House fare better with it. Already, discords threatening to arise, Hagen sees prudent to sink it in the Rhine; first taking oath of Gunther and his brothers, that none of them shall reveal the hiding-place, while any of the rest is alive. But the curse that clave to it could not be sunk there. The Nibelungen-land is now theirs: they themselves are henceforth called Nibelungen; and this history of their fate is the Nibelungen Song, or *Nibelungen Noth* (Nibelungen's Need, extreme Need, or final wreck and abolition).

The Fifth Act of our strange eventful history now draws on. Chriemhild has a kind husband, of hospitable disposition, who troubles himself little about her secret feelings and intents. With his permission, she sends two minstrels, inviting the Burgundian Court to a high-tide at Etzel's: she has charged the messengers to say that she is happy, and to bring all Gunther's champions with them. Her eye was on Hagen, but she could not single him from the rest. After seven days' deliberation, Gunther answers that he will come. Hagen has loudly dissuaded the journey, but again been overruled. 'It is his fate,' says a commentator, 'like 'Cassandra's, ever to foresee the evil, and ever to be disregarded. 'He himself shut his ear against the inward voice; and now his 'warnings are uttered to the deaf.' He argues long, but in vain: nay young Gernot hints at last that this aversion originates in personal fear:

Then spake Von Troneg Hagen: "Nowise is it through fear;
So you command it, Heroes, Then up, gird on your gear;
I ride with you the foremost Into King Etzel's land."
Since then full many a helm Was shivered by his hand.

Frau Ute's dreams and omens are now unavailing with him; "whoso heedeth dreams," said Hagen, "of the right story wotteth not:" he has computed the worst issue, and defied it.

Many a little touch of pathos, and even solemn beauty lies carelessly scattered in these rhymes, had we space to exhibit such here. As specimen of a strange, winding, diffuse, yet innocently graceful style of narrative, we had translated some considerable portion of this Twenty-fifth *Aventiure*, 'How the Nibelungen marched (fared) to the Huns,' into verses as literal as might be; which now, alas, look mournfully different from the original; almost like Scriblerus's shield when the barbarian housemaid had scoured it! Nevertheless, to do for the reader what we can, let somewhat of that modernised ware, such as it is, be set before him. The brave Nibelungen are on the eve of departure; and about ferrying over the Rhine: and here it may be noted that Worms,[8]

[8] This City of Worms, had we a right imagination, ought to be as venerable to us Moderns, as any Thebes or Troy was to the Ancients. Whether founded by the Gods or not, it is of quite unknown antiquity, and has witnessed the most wonderful things. Within authentic times, the Romans were here; and if tradition may be credited, Attila also; it was the seat of the Austrasian kings; the frequent residence of Charlemagne himself; innumerable Festivals, High-tides, Tournaments and Imperial Diets were held in it, of which latter,

with our old Singer, lies not in its true position, but at some distance from the river; a proof at least that he was never there, and probably sang and lived in some very distant region:

The boats were floating ready, And many men there were;
What clothes of price they had They took and stow'd them there,
Was never a rest from toiling Until the eventide,
Then they took the flood right gaily, Would longer not abide.

Brave tents and hutches You saw raised on the grass,
Other side the Rhine-stream That camp it pitched was:
The king to stay a while Was besought of his fair wife;
That night she saw him with her, And never more in life.

Trumpets and flutes spoke out, At dawning of the day,
That time was come for parting, So they rose to march away:
Who loved-one had in arms Did kiss that same, I ween;
And fond farewells were bidden By cause of Etzel's Queen.

Frau Ute's noble sons They had a serving-man,
A brave one and a true: Or ever the march began,
He speaketh to King Gunther, What for his ear was fit,
He said: "Woe for this journey, I grieve because of it."

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one at least, that where Luther appeared in 1521, will be forever remembered by all mankind. Nor is Worms more famous in history than, as indeed we may see here, it is in romance; whereof many monuments and vestiges remain to *this day*. 'A pleasant meadow there,' says Von der Hagen, 'is still called 'Chriemhild's *Rosengarten*. The name *Worms* itself is derived (by Legendary 'Etymology) from the Dragon, or *Worm*, which Siegfried slew, the figure of 'which once formed the City Arms; in past times, there was also to be seen 'here an ancient strong *Riesen-Haus* (Giant's-house), and many a memorial of 'Siegfried: his Lance, 66 feet long (almost 80 English feet), in the Cathedral; 'his Statue, of gigantic size, on the *Neue Thurm* (New Tower) on the Rhine;' &c. &c. 'And lastly the Siegfried's Chapel, in primeval, Pre-Gothic architec-'ture, not long since pulled down. In the time of the *Meistersängers* too, the 'Stadtrath was bound to give every Master, who sang the lay of Siegfried '(*Meisterlied von Siegfrieden*, the purport of which is now unknown) without 'mistake, a certain gratuity.' *Glossary to the Nibelungen*, § *Worms*.

One is sorry to learn that this famed Imperial City is no longer Imperial, but much fallen in every way from its palmy state; the 30,000 inhabitants, to be found there in Gustavus Adolphus' time, having now declined into some 6,800,—'who maintain themselves by wine-growing, Rhine-boats, tobacco-'manufacture, and making sugar-of-lead.' So hard has war, which respects nothing, pressed on Worms, ill-placed for safety, on the hostile border: Louvois, or Louis XIV., in 1689, had it utterly devastated; whereby in the interior, 'spaces that were once covered with buildings are now gardens.' See *Conv. Lexicon*, § *Worms*.

He, Rumold hight, the Sewer, Was known as hero true;
He spake: "Whom shall this people And land be trusted to?
Woe on't, will nought persuade ye, Brave Recken, from this road!
Frau Chriemhild's flattering message No good doth seem to bode."

"The land to thee be trusted, And my fair boy also,
And serve thou well the women, I tell thee ere I go;
Whomso thou findest weeping Her heart give comfort to;
No harm to one of us King Etzel's wife will do."

The steeds were standing ready, For the Kings and for their men;
With kisses tenderest Took leave full many then,
Who, in gallant cheer and hope, To march were nought afraid:
Them since that day bewaileth Many a noble wife and maid.

But when the rapid Recken Took horse and prickt away,
The women shent in sorrow You saw behind them stay;
Of parting all too long Their hearts to them did tell;
When grief so great is coming, The mind forebodes not well.

Nathless the brisk Burgonden All on their way did go,
Then rose the country over A mickle dole and woe;
On both sides of the hills Woman and man did weep:
Let their folk do how they list, These gay their course did keep.

The Nibelungen Recken[9] Did march with them as well,
In a thousand glittering hauberks, Who at home had ta'en farewell
Of many a fair woman Should see them never more:
The wound of her brave Siegfried Did grieve Chriemhilde sore.

Then 'gan they shape their journey Towards the River Maine,
All on through East Franconia, King Gunther and his train;
Hagen he was their leader, Of old did know the way;
Dankwart did keep, as marshal, Their ranks in good array.

As they, from East Franconia, The Salfield rode along,
Might you have seen them prancing, A bright and lordly throng,
The Princes and their vassals, All heroes of great fame:
The twelfth morn brave King Gunther Unto the Donau came.

There rode Von Troneg Hagen, The foremost of that host,
He was to the Nibelungen The guide they lov'd the most:

[9] These are the Nibelungen proper who had come to Worms with Siegfried, on the famed bridal journey from Isenstein, long ago. Observe, at the same time, that ever since the *Nibelungen Hoard* was transferred to Rhineland, the whole subjects of King Gunther are often called Nibelungen, and their subsequent history is this *Nibelungen Song*.

The Ritter keen dismounted, Set foot on the sandy ground,
His steed to a tree he tied, Looked wistful all around.

"Much scaith," Von Troneg said, "May lightly chance to thee,
King Gunther, by this tide, As thou with eyes mayst see:
The river is overflowing, Full strong runs here its stream,
For crossing of this Donau Some counsel might well beseem."

"What counsel hast thou, brave Hagen," King Gunther then did say,
"Of thy own wit and cunning? Dishearten me not, I pray:
Thyself the ford wilt find us, If knightly skill it can,
That safe to yonder shore We may pass both horse and man."

"To me, I trow," spake Hagen, "Life hath not grown so cheap,
To go with will and drown me In riding these waters deep;
But first, of men some few By this hand of mine shall die,
In great King Etzel's country, As best good-will have I.

But bide ye here by the River, Ye Ritters brisk and sound,
Myself will seek some boatman, If boatman here be found,
To row us at his ferry, Across to Gelfrat's land:"
The Troneger grasped his buckler, Fared forth along the strand.

He was full bravely harness'd, Himself he knightly bore,
With buckler and with helmet, Which bright enough he wore:
And, bound above his hauberk, A weapon broad was seen,
That cut with both its edges, Was never sword so keen.

Then hither he and thither Search'd for the Ferryman,
He heard a splashing of waters, To watch the same he 'gan,
It was the white Mer-women, That in a fountain clear,
To cool their fair bodyes, Were merrily bathing here.

From these Mer-women, who 'skimmed aloof like white cygnets' at sight of him, Hagen snatches up 'their wondrous raiment;' on condition of returning which, they rede him his fortune; how this expedition is to speed. At first favourably:

She said: "To Etzel's country Of a truth ye well may hie,
For here I pledge my hand, Now kill me if I lie,
That heroes seeking honour Did never arrive thereat
So richly as ye shall do, Believe thou surely that."

But no sooner is the wondrous raiment restored them than they change their tale; for in spite of that matchless honour, it appears every one of the adventurous Recken is to perish.

Outspake the wild Mer-woman: "I tell thee it will arrive,
Of all your gallant host No man shall be left alive,
Except King Gunther's chaplain, As we full well do know;
He only, home returning, To the Rhine-land back shall go."

Then spake Von Troneg Hagen, His wrath did fiercely swell:
"Such tidings to my master I were right loath to tell,
That in King Etzel's country We all must lose our life;
Yet show me over the water, Thou wise all-knowing *wife*."

Thereupon, seeing him bent on ruin, she gives directions how to find the ferry, but withal counsels him to deal warily; the ferry-house stands on the other side of the river; the boatman, too, is not only the hottest-tempered of men, but rich and indolent; nevertheless, if nothing else will serve, let Hagen call himself Amelrich, and that name will bring him. All happens as predicted: the boatman, heedless of all shouting and offers of gold clasps, bestirs him lustily at the name of Amelrich; but the more indignant is he, on taking-in his fare, to find it a counterfeit. He orders Hagen, if he loves his life, to leap out.

"Now say not that," spake Hagen; "Right hard am I bested,
Take from me for good friendship This clasp of gold so red;
And row our thousand heroes And steeds across this river."
Then spake the wrathful boatman, "That will I surely never."

Then one of his oars he lifted, Right broad it was and long,
He struck it down on Hagen, Did the hero mickle wrong,
That in the boat he staggered, And alighted on his knee;
Other such wrathful boatman Did never the Troneger see.

His proud unbidden guest He would now provoke still more,
He struck his head so stoutly that it broke in twain the oar,
With strokes on head of Hagen; He was a sturdy wight:
Nathless had Gelfrat's boatman Small profit of that fight.

With fiercely-raging spirit The Troneger turn'd him round,
Clutch'd quick enough his scabbard, And a weapon there he found;
He smote his head from off him, And cast it on the sand,
Thus had that wrathful boatman His death from Hagen's hand.

Even as Von Troneg Hagen The wrathful boatman slew,
The boat whirl'd round to the river, He had work enough to do;
Or ever he turn'd it shorewards, To weary he began,
But kept full stoutly rowing, The bold King Gunther's man.

He wheel'd it back, brave Hagen, With many a lusty stroke,
The strong oar, with such rowing, In his hand asunder broke;
He fain would reach the Recken, All waiting on the shore,
No tackle now he had; Hei,[10] how deftly he spliced the oar,

With thong from off his buckler! It was a slender band;
Right over against a forest He drove the boat to land;
Where Gunther's Recken waited, In crowds along the beach;
Full many a goodly hero Moved down his boat to reach.

Hagen ferries them over himself 'into the unknown land,' like a right yare steersman; yet ever brooding fiercely on that prediction of the wild Mer-woman, which had outdone even his own dark forebodings. Seeing the Chaplain, who alone of them all was to return, standing in the boat beside his *chappelsoume* (pyxes and other sacred furniture), he determines to belie at least this part of the prophecy, and on a sudden hurls the chaplain overboard. Nay as the poor priest swims after the boat, he pushes him down, regardless of all remonstrance, resolved that he shall die. Nevertheless it proved not so: the chaplain made for the other side; when his strength failed, 'then God's hand helped him,' and at length he reached the shore. Thus does the stern truth stand revealed to Hagen, by the very means he took for eluding it: 'he thought with himself these Recken must all lose their lives.' From this time, a grim reckless spirit takes possession of him; a courage, an audacity, waxing more and more into the fixed strength of desperation. The passage once finished, he dashes the boat in pieces, and casts it in the stream, greatly as the others wonder at him.

"Why do ye this, good brother?" Said the Ritter Dankwart then;
"How shall we cross this river, When the road we come again?
Returning home from Hunland, Here must we lingering stay?"—
Not then did Hagen tell him That return no more could they.

In this shipment 'into the unknown land,' there lies, for the more penetrating sort of commentators, some hidden meaning and allusion. The destruction of the unreturning Ship, as of the Ship

[10] These apparently insignificant circumstances, down even to mending the oar from his shield, are preserved with a singular fidelity in the most distorted editions of the Tale: see, for example, the Danish ballad, *Lady Grimhild's Wrack* (translated in the *Northern Antiquities*, p. 275, by Mr. Jamieson). This '*Hei!*' is a brisk interjection, whereby the worthy old Singer now and then introduces his own person, when anything very eminent is going forward.

Argo, of Æneas's Ships, and the like, is a constant feature of such traditions: it is thought, this ferrying of the Nibelungen has a reference to old Scandinavian Mythuses; nay to the oldest, most universal emblems shaped out by man's Imagination; Hagen the ferryman being, in some sort, a type of Death, who ferries over his thousands and tens of thousands into a Land still more unknown.[11]

But leaving these considerations, let us remark the deep fearful interest which, in gathering strength, rises to a really tragical height in the close of this Poem. Strangely has the old Singer, in these his loose melodies, modulated the wild narrative into a poetic whole, with what we might call true art, were it not rather an instinct of genius still more unerring. A fateful gloom now hangs over the fortunes of the Nibelungen, which deepens and deepens as they march onwards to the judgment-bar, till all are engulfed in utter night.

Hagen himself rises in tragic greatness; so helpful, so prompt and strong is he, and true to the death, though without hope. If sin can ever be pardoned, then that one act of his is pardonable; by loyal faith, by free daring and heroic constancy, he has made amends for it. Well does he know what is coming; yet he goes forth to meet it, offers to Ruin his sullen welcome. Warnings thicken on him, which he treats lightly, as things now superfluous. Spite of our love for Siegfried, we must pity and almost respect the lost Hagen now in his extreme need, and fronting it so nobly. 'Mixed was his hair with a gray colour, his limbs strong, and 'threatening his look.' Nay, his sterner qualities are beautifully tempered by another feeling, of which till now we understood not that he was capable,—the feeling of friendship. There is a certain Volker of Alsace here introduced, not for the first time, yet first in decided energy, who is more to Hagen than a brother. This Volker, a courtier and noble, is also a *Spielmann* (minstrel), a *Fidelere gut* (fiddler good); and surely the prince of all *Fideleres;* in truth a very phœnix, melodious as the soft nightingale, yet strong as the royal eagle: for also in the brunt of battle he can play tunes; and with a *Steel Fiddlebow* beats strange music from the cleft helmets of his enemies. There is, in this continual allusion to Volker's *Schwert-fidelbogen* (Sword-fiddlebow), as rude as it sounds to us, a barbaric greatness and depth; the light minstrel of kingly and queenly halls is gay also in the storm of Fate, its dire rushing pipes and whistles to him: is he not the

[11] See Von der Hagen's *Nibelungen, ihre Bedeutung*, &c.

image of every brave man fighting with Necessity, be that duel when and where it may; smiting the fiend with giant strokes, yet every stroke *musical?*—This Volker and Hagen are united inseparably, and defy death together. 'Whatever Volker said pleased Hagen; whatever Hagen did pleased Volker.'

But into these last Ten *Aventiures*, almost like the image of a Doomsday, we must hardly glance at present. Seldom, perhaps, in the poetry of that or any other age, has a grander scene of pity and terror been exhibited than here, could we look into it clearly. At every new step new shapes of fear arise. Dietrich of Bern meets the Nibelungen on their way, with ominous warnings: but warnings, as we said, are now superfluous, when the evil itself is apparent and inevitable. Chriemhild, wasted and exasperated here into a frightful Medea, openly threatens Hagen, but is openly defied by him; he and Volker retire to a seat before her palace, and sit there, while she advances in angry tears, with a crowd of armed Huns, to destroy them. But Hagen has Siegfried's Balmung lying naked on his knee, the Minstrel also has drawn his keen Fiddlebow, and the Huns dare not provoke the battle. Chriemhild would fain single out Hagen for vengeance; but Hagen, like other men, stands not alone; and sin is an infection which will not rest with one victim. Partakers or not of his crime, the others also must share his punishment. Singularly touching, in the mean while, is King Etzel's ignorance of what every one else understands too well; and how, in peaceful hospitable spirit, he exerts himself to testify his joy over these royal guests of his, who are bidden hither for far other ends. That night the wayworn Nibelungen are sumptuously lodged; yet Hagen and Volker see good to keep watch: Volker plays them to sleep: 'under the porch 'of the house he sat on the stone: bolder fiddler was there never 'any; when the tones flowed so sweetly, they all gave him thanks. 'Then sounded his strings till all the house rang; his strength and 'the art were great; sweeter and sweeter he began to play, till 'flitted forth from him into sleep full many a careworn soul.' It was their last lullaby; they were to sleep no more. Armed men appear, but suddenly vanish, in the night; assassins sent by Chriemhild, expecting no sentinel: it is plain that the last hour draws nigh.

In the morning the Nibelungen are for the Minster to hear mass; they are putting on gay raiment; but Hagen tells them a different tale: '"ye must take other garments, Recken; instead

'of silk shirts hauberks, for rich mantles your good shields: and, 'beloved masters, moreover squires and men, ye shall full earnestly 'go to the church, and plain to God the powerful (*Got dem richen*) 'of your sorrow and utmost need; and know of a surety that death 'for us is nigh."' In Etzel's Hall, where the Nibelungen appear at the royal feast in complete armour, the Strife, incited by Chriemhild, begins; the first answer to her provocation is from Hagen, who hews off the head of her own and Etzel's son, making it bound into the mother's bosom: 'then began among the Recken a murder grim and great.' Dietrich, with a voice of preternatural power, commands pause; retires with Etzel and Chriemhild; and now the bloody work has free course. We have heard of battles, and massacres, and deadly struggles in siege and storm; but seldom has even the poet's imagination pictured anything so fierce and terrible as this. Host after host, as they enter that huge vaulted Hall, perish in conflict with the doomed Nibelungen; and ever after the terrific uproar, ensues a still more terrific silence. All night and through morning it lasts. They throw the dead from the windows; blood runs like water; the Hall is set fire to, they quench it with blood, their own burning thirst they slake with blood. It is a tumult like the Crack of Doom, a thousand-voiced, wild-stunning hubbub; and, frightful like a Trump of Doom, the *Sword-fiddlebow* of Volker, who guards the door, makes music to that death-dance. Nor are traits of heroism wanting, and thrilling tones of pity and love; as in that act of Rudiger, Etzel's and Chriemhild's champion, who, bound by oath, 'lays his soul in God's hand,' and enters that Golgotha to die fighting against his friends; yet first changes shields with Hagen, whose own, also given him by Rudiger in a far other hour, had been shattered in the fight. 'When he so lovingly bade give him the 'shield, there were eyes enough red with hot tears; it was the last 'gift which Rudiger of Bechelaren gave to any Recke. As grim 'as Hagen was, and as hard of mind, he wept at this gift which 'the hero good, so near his last times, had given him; full many 'a noble Ritter began to weep.'

At last Volker is slain; they are all slain, save only Hagen and Gunther, faint and wounded, yet still unconquered among the bodies of the dead. Dietrich the wary, though strong and invincible, whose Recken too, except old Hildebrand, he now finds are all killed, though he had charged them strictly not to mix in the quarrel, at last arms himself to finish it. He subdues the two

wearied Nibelungen, binds them, delivers them to Chriemhild; 'and Herr Dietrich went away with weeping eyes, worthily from 'the heroes.' These never saw each other more. Chriemhild demands of Hagen, Where the Nibelungen Hoard is? But he answers her, that he has sworn never to disclose it, while any of her brothers live. "I bring it to an end," said the infuriated woman; orders her brother's head to be struck off, and holds it up to Hagen. '"Thou hast it now according to thy will," said Hagen; '"of the Hoard knoweth none but God and I; from thee, she-'devil (*valendinne*), shall it forever be hid."' She kills him with his own sword, once her husband's; and is herself struck dead by Hildebrand, indignant at the woe she has wrought; King Etzel, there present, not opposing the deed. Whereupon the curtain drops over that wild scene: 'the full highly honoured were lying 'dead; the people all had sorrow and lamentation; in grief had 'the king's feast ended, as all love is wont to do:'

Ine chan iu nicht bescheiden Waz sider da geschach,
Wan ritter unde wrovven Weinen man do sach,
Dar-zuo die edeln chnechte Ir lieben vriunde tot:
Da hat das mære ein ende; Diz ist der Nibelunge not.

I cannot say you now What hath befallen since;
The women all were weeping, And the Ritters and the prince,
Also the noble squires, Their dear friends lying dead:
Here hath the story ending; This is the *Nibelungen's Need.*

We have now finished our slight analysis of this Poem; and hope that readers who are curious in this matter, and ask themselves, What is the *Nibelungen?* may have here found some outlines of an answer, some help towards farther researches of their own. To such readers another question will suggest itself: Whence this singular production comes to us, When and How it originated? On which point also, what little light our investigation has yielded may be summarily given.

The worthy Von der Hagen, who may well understand the *Nibelungen* better than any other man, having rendered it into the modern tongue, and twice edited it in the original, not without collating some eleven manuscripts, and travelling several thousands of miles to make the last edition perfect,—writes a Book some years ago, rather boldly denominated *The Nibelungen, its Meaning for the present and forever;* wherein, not content with any measurable antiquity of centuries, he would fain claim an antiquity

beyond all bounds of dated time. Working his way with feeble mine-lamps of etymology and the like, he traces back the rudiments of his beloved *Nibelungen*, 'to which the flower of his whole life has been consecrated,' into the thick darkness of the Scandinavian *Niflheim* and *Muspelheim*, and the Hindoo Cosmogony; connecting it farther (as already in part we have incidentally pointed out) with the Ship Argo, with Jupiter's goatskin Ægis, the fire-creed of Zerdusht, and even with the heavenly Constellations. His reasoning is somewhat abstruse; yet an honest zeal, very considerable learning and intellectual force bring him tolerably through. So much he renders plausible or probable: that in the *Nibelungen*, under more or less defacement, lie fragments, scattered like mysterious Runes, yet still in part decipherable, of the earliest Thoughts of men; that the fiction of the Nibelungen was at first a religious or philosophical Mythus; and only in later ages, incorporating itself more or less completely with vague traditions of real events, took the form of a story, or mere Narrative of earthly transactions; in which last form, moreover, our actual *Nibelungen Lied* is nowise the original Narrative, but the second, or even the third redaction of one much earlier.

At what particular era the primeval fiction of the *Nibelungen* passed from its Mythological into its Historical shape; and the obscure spiritual elements of it wedded themselves to the obscure remembrances of the Northern Immigrations; and the Twelve Signs of the Zodiac became Twelve Champions of Attila's Wife,—there is no fixing with the smallest certainty. It is known from history that Eginhart, the secretary of Charlemagne, compiled, by order of that monarch, a collection of the ancient German Songs; among which, it is fondly believed by antiquaries, this *Nibelungen* (not indeed our actual *Nibelungen Lied*, yet an older one of similar purport), and the main traditions of the *Heldenbuch* connected therewith, may have had honourable place. Unluckily Eginhart's Collection has quite perished, and only his Life of the Great Charles, in which this circumstance stands noted, survives to provoke curiosity. One thing is certain, Fulco Archbishop of Rheims, in the year 885, is introduced as 'citing certain German books,' to enforce some argument of his by instance of 'King Ermerich's crime toward his relations;' which King Ermerich and his crime are at this day part and parcel of the 'Cycle of German Fiction,' and presupposed in the *Nibelungen*.[12] Later notices, of a

[12] Von der Hagen's *Nibelungen*, Einleitung, § vii.

more decisive sort, occur in abundance. Saxo Grammaticus, who flourished in the twelfth century, relates that about the year 1130, a Saxon Minstrel being sent to Seeland, with a treacherous invitation from one royal Dane to another; and not daring to violate his oath, yet compassionating the victim, sang to him by way of indirect warning 'the Song of Chriemhild's Treachery to her Brothers;' that is to say, the latter portion of the Story which we still read at greater length in the existing *Nibelungen Lied*. To which direct evidence, that these traditions were universally known in the twelfth century, nay had been in some shape committed to writing, as 'German Books,' in the ninth or rather in the eighth, —we have still to add the probability of their being 'ancient songs,' even at that earliest date; all which may perhaps carry us back into the seventh or even sixth century; yet not farther, inasmuch as certain of the poetic personages that figure in them belong historically to the fifth.

Other and more open proof of antiquity lies in the fact, that these Traditions are so universally diffused. There are Danish and Icelandic versions of them, externally more or less altered and distorted, yet substantially real copies, professing indeed to be borrowed from the German; in particular we have the *Niflinga* and the *Wilkina Saga*, composed in the thirteenth century, which still in many ways illustrate the German original. Innumerable other songs and sagas point more remotely in the same direction. Nay, as Von der Hagen informs us, certain rhymed tales, founded on these old adventures, have been recovered from popular recitation, in the Faroe Islands, within these few years.

If we ask now, What lineaments of Fact still exist in these Traditions; what are the Historical events and persons which our primeval Mythuses have here united with, and so strangely metamorphosed? the answer is unsatisfactory enough. The great Northern Immigrations, unspeakably momentous and glorious as they were for the Germans, have well-nigh faded away utterly from all vernacular records. Some traces, nevertheless, some names and dim shadows of occurrences in that grand movement, still linger here; which, in such circumstances, we gather with avidity. There can be no doubt, for example, but this 'Etzel, king of Hunland,' is the Attila of history; several of whose real achievements and relations are faintly yet still recognisably pictured forth in these Poems. Thus his first queen is named Halke, and in the Scandinavian versions, Herka; which last (Erca) is also the

name that Priscus gives her, in the well-known account of his embassy to Attila. Moreover, it is on his second marriage, which had in fact so mysterious and tragical a character, that the whole catastrophe of the *Nibelungen* turns. It is true, the 'Scourge of God' plays but a tame part here; however, his great acts, though all past, are still visible in their fruits: besides, it is on the Northern or German personages that the tradition chiefly dwells.

Taking farther into account the general 'Cycle,' or System of Northern Tradition, whereof this *Nibelungen* is the centre and keystone, there is, as indeed we saw in the *Heldenbuch*, a certain Kaiser Ottnit and a Dietrich of Bern; to whom also it seems unreasonable to deny historical existence. This *Bern* (Verona), as well as the *Rabenschlacht* (Battle of Ravenna), is continually figuring in these fictions; though whether under Ottnit we are to understand Odoacer the vanquished, and under Dietrich of Bern Theodoricus Veronensis, the victor both at Verona and Ravenna, is by no means so indubitable. Chronological difficulties stand much in the way. For our Dietrich of Bern, as we saw in the *Nibelungen*, is represented as one of Etzel's Champions: now Attila died about the year 450; and this Ostrogoth Theodoric did not fight his great Battle at Verona till 489; that of Ravenna, which was followed by a three years' siege, happening next year. So that before Dietrich could become Dietrich *of Bern*, Etzel had been gone almost half a century from the scene. Startled by this anachronism, some commentators have fished out another Theodoric, eighty years prior to him of Verona, and who actually served in Attila's hosts, with a retinue of Goths and Germans; with which new Theodoric, however, the old Ottnit, or Odoacer, of the *Heldenbuch* must, in his turn, part company; whereby the case is no whit mended. Certain it seems, in the mean time, that *Dietrich*, which signifies *Rich in People*, is the same name which in Greek becomes Theodoricus; for at first (as in Procopius) this very *Theodoricus* is always written Θευδεριχ, which almost exactly corresponds with the German sound. But such are the inconsistencies involved in both hypotheses, that we are forced to conclude one of two things: either that the Singers of those old Lays were little versed in the niceties of History, and unambitious of passing for authorities therein; which seems a remarkably easy conclusion: or else, with Lessing, that they meant some quite other series of persons and transactions, some Kaiser Otto, and his two Anti-

451364

Kaisers (in the twelfth century); which, from what has come to light since Lessing's day, seems now an untenable position.

However, as concerns the *Nibelungen*, the most remarkable coincidence, if genuine, remains yet to be mentioned. 'Thwortz,' a Hungarian Chronicler (or perhaps Chronicle), of we know not what authority, relates, 'that Attila left his kingdom to his two 'sons Chaba and Aladar, the former by a Grecian mother, the 'latter by Kremheilch (Chriemhild) a German; that Theodoric, 'one of his followers, sowed dissension between them; and, along 'with the Teutonic hosts, took part with his half-countryman the 'younger son; whereupon rose a great slaughter, which lasted for 'fifteen days, and terminated in the defeat of Chaba (the Greek), 'and his flight into Asia.'[13] Could we but put faith in this Thwortz, we might fancy that some vague rumour of that Kremheilch Tragedy, swoln by the way, had reached the German ear and imagination; where, gathering round older Ideas and Mythuses, as Matter round its Spirit, the first rude form of *Chriemhilde's Revenge and the Wreck of the Nibelungen* bodied itself forth in Song.

Thus any historical light emitted by these old Fictions is little better than darkness visible; sufficient at most to indicate that great Northern Immigrations, and wars and rumours of war have been; but nowise how and what they have been. Scarcely clearer is the special history of the Fictions themselves; where they were first put together, who have been their successive redactors and new-modellers. Von der Hagen, as we said, supposes that there may have been three several series of such. Two, at all events, are clearly indicated. In their present shape we have internal evidence that none of these poems can be older than the twelfth century; indeed, great part of the *Hero-book* can be proved to be considerably later. With this last it is understood that Wolfram von Eschenbach and Heinrich von Ofterdingen, two singers otherwise noted in that era, were largely concerned; but neither is there any demonstration of this vague belief: while again, in regard to the Author of our actual *Nibelungen*, not so much as a plausible conjecture can be formed.

Some vote for a certain Conrad von Würzburg; others for the above-named Eschenbach and Ofterdingen; others again for Klingsohr of Ungerland, a minstrel who once passed for a magician.

[13] Weber (*Illustrations of Northern Antiquities*, p. 39), who cites Görres (*Zeitung für Einsiedler*) as his authority.

Against all and each of which hypotheses there are objections; and for none of them the smallest conclusive evidence. Who this gifted singer may have been, only in so far as his Work itself proves that there was but One, and the style points to the latter half of the twelfth century,—remains altogether dark: the unwearied Von der Hagen himself, after fullest investigation, gives for verdict, 'we know it not.' Considering the high worth of the *Nibelungen*, and how many feeble ballad-mongers of that *Swabian Era* have transmitted us their names, so total an oblivion, in this infinitely more important case, may seem surprising. But those *Minnelieder* (Love-songs) and Provençal Madrigals were the Court Poetry of that time, and gained honour in high places; while the old National Traditions were common property and plebeian, and to sing them an unrewarded labour.

Whoever he may be, let him have our gratitude, our love. Looking back with a farewell glance, over that wondrous old Tale, with its many-coloured texture 'of joyances and high-tides, of weeping and of woe,' so skilfully yet artlessly knit-ûp into a whole, we cannot but repeat that a true epic spirit lives in it; that in many ways it has meaning and charms for us. Not only as the oldest Tradition of Modern Europe, does it possess a high antiquarian interest; but farther, and even in the shape we now see it under, unless the 'Epics of the Son of Fingal' had some sort of authenticity, it is our oldest Poem also; the earliest product of these New Ages, which on its own merits, both in form and essence, can be named Poetical. Considering its chivalrous, romantic tone, it may rank as a piece of literary composition, perhaps considerably higher than the Spanish *Cid;* taking-in its historical significance, and deep ramifications into the remote Time, it ranks indubitably and greatly higher.

It has been called a Northern *Iliad;* but except in the fact that both Poems have a narrative character, and both sing 'the destructive rage' of men, the two have scarcely any similarity. The Singer of the *Nibelungen* is a far different person from Homer; far inferior both in culture and in genius. Nothing of the glowing imagery, of the fierce bursting energy, of the mingled fire and gloom, that dwell in the old Greek, makes its appearance here. The German Singer is comparatively a simple nature; has never penetrated deep into life; never 'questioned Fate;' or struggled with fearful mysteries; of all which we find traces in Homer, still more in Shakspeare; but with meek believing submission, has

taken the Universe as he found it represented to him; and rejoices with a fine childlike gladness in the mere outward shows of things. He has little power of delineating character; perhaps he had no decisive vision thereof. His persons are superficially distinguished, and not altogether without generic difference; but the portraiture is imperfectly brought out; there lay no true living original within him. He has little Fancy; we find scarcely one or two similitudes in his whole Poem; and these one or two, which moreover are repeated, betoken no special faculty that way. He speaks of the 'moon among stars;' says often, of sparks struck from steel armour in battle, and so forth, that they were *wie es wehte der wind*, 'as if the wind were blowing them.' We have mentioned Tasso along with him; yet neither in this case is there any close resemblance; the light playful grace, still more the Italian pomp and sunny luxuriance of Tasso are wanting in the other. His are humble wood-notes wild; no nightingale's, but yet a sweet sky-hidden lark's. In all the rhetorical gifts, to say nothing of rhetorical attainments, we should pronounce him even poor.

Nevertheless, a noble soul he must have been, and furnished with far more essential requisites for Poetry than these are; namely, with the heart and feeling of a Poet. He has a clear eye for the Beautiful and True; all unites itself gracefully and compactly in his imagination: it is strange with what careless felicity he winds his way in that complex Narrative, and, be the subject what it will, comes through it unsullied, and with a smile. His great strength is an unconscious instinctive strength; wherein truly lies his highest merit. The whole spirit of Chivalry, of Love, and heroic Valour, must have lived in him and inspired him. Everywhere he shows a noble Sensibility; the sad accents of parting friends, the lamentings of women, the high daring of men, all that is worthy and lovely prolongs itself in melodious echoes through his heart. A true old Singer, and taught of Nature herself! Neither let us call him an inglorious Milton, since now he is no longer a mute one. What good were it that the four or five Letters composing his Name could be printed, and pronounced, with absolute certainty? All that was mortal in him is gone utterly; of his life, and its environment, as of the bodily tabernacle he dwelt in, the very ashes remain not: like a fair heavenly Apparition, which indeed he *was*, he has melted into air, and only the Voice he uttered, in virtue of its inspired gift, yet lives and will live.

To the Germans this *Nibelungen Song* is naturally an object of no common love; neither if they sometimes overvalue it, and vague antiquarian wonder is more common than just criticism, should the fault be too heavily visited. After long ages of concealment, they have found it in the remote wilderness, still standing like the trunk of some almost antediluvian oak; nay with boughs on it still green, after all the wind and weather of twelve hundred years. To many a patriotic feeling, which lingers fondly in solitary places of the Past, it may well be a rallying-point, and 'Lovers' *Trysting-tree.*'

For us also it has its worth. A creation from the old ages, still bright and balmy, if we visit it; and opening into the first History of Europe, of Mankind. Thus all is not oblivion; but on the edge of the abyss that separates the Old world from the New, there hangs a fair Rainbow-land; which also, in curious repetitions of itself (*twice* over, say the critics), as it were in a secondary and even a ternary reflex, sheds some feeble twilight far into the deeps of the primeval Time.

EARLY GERMAN LITERATURE.

EARLY GERMAN LITERATURE.[1]

[1831.]

IT is not with Herr Soltau's work, and its merits or demerits, that we here purpose to concern ourselves. The old Low-German Apologue was already familiar under many shapes; in versions into Latin, English and all modern tongues: if it now comes before our German friends under a new shape, and they can read it not only in Gottsched's prosaic Prose, and Goethe's poetic Hexameters, but also 'in the metre of the original,' namely, in Doggerel; and this, as would appear, not without comfort, for it is 'the second edition;'—doubtless the Germans themselves will look to it, will direct Herr Soltau aright in his praiseworthy labours, and, with all suitable speed, forward him from his second edition into a third. To us strangers the fact is chiefly interesting, as another little memento of the indestructible vitality there is in worth, however rude; and to stranger Reviewers, as it brings that wondrous old Fiction, with so much else that holds of it, once more specifically into view.

The Apologue of *Reynard the Fox* ranks undoubtedly among the most remarkable Books, not only as a German, but, in all senses, as a European one; and yet for us perhaps its extrinsic, historical character is even more noteworthy than its intrinsic. In Literary History it forms, so to speak, the culminating point, or highest manifestation of a Tendency which had ruled the two prior centuries: ever downwards from the last of the Hohenstauffen Emperors, and the end of their Swabian Era, to the borders of the Reformation, rudiments and fibres of this singular Fable are seen,

[1] FOREIGN QUARTERLY REVIEW, No. 16.—*Reinecke der Fuchs, übersetzt von D. W. Soltau* (Reynard the Fox, translated by D. W. Soltau), 2d edition, 8vo. Lüneburg, 1830.

among innumerable kindred things, fashioning themselves together; and now, after three other centuries of actual existence, it still stands visible and entire, venerable in itself, and the enduring memorial of much that has proved more perishable. Thus, naturally enough, it figures as the representative of a whole group that historically cluster round it; in studying its significance, we study that of a whole intellectual period.

As this section of German Literature closely connects itself with the corresponding section of European Literature, and, indeed, offers an expressive, characteristic epitome thereof, some insight into it, were such easily procurable, might not be without profit. No Literary Historian that we know of, least of all any in England, having looked much in this direction, either as concerned Germany or other countries, whereby a long space of time, once busy enough and full of life, now lies barren and void in men's memories,—we shall here endeavour to present, in such clearness as first attempts may admit, the result of some slight researches of our own in regard to it.

The *Troubadour Period* in general Literature, to which the *Swabian Era* in German answers, has, especially within the last generation, attracted inquiry enough; the French have their Raynouards, we our Webers, the Germans their Haugs, Gräters, Langs, and numerous other Collectors and Translators of *Minnelieder;* among whom Ludwig Tieck, the foremost in far other provinces, has not disdained to take the lead. We shall suppose that this Literary Period is partially known to all readers. Let each recall whatever he has learned or figured regarding it; represent to himself that brave young heyday of Chivalry and Minstrelsy, when a stern Barbarossa, a stern Lion-heart, sang *sirventes*, and with the hand that could wield the sword and sceptre twanged the melodious strings; when knights-errant tilted, and ladies' eyes rained bright influences; and suddenly, as at sunrise, the whole Earth had grown vocal and musical. Then truly was the time of singing come; for princes and prelates, emperors and squires, the wise and the simple, men, women and children, all sang and rhymed, or delighted in hearing it done. It was a universal noise of Song; as if the Spring of Manhood had arrived, and warblings from every spray, not, indeed, without infinite twitterings also, which, except their gladness, had no music, were bidding it welcome. This was the *Swabian Era;* justly reckoned not only superior to all preceding eras, but properly the First Era

of German Literature. Poetry had at length found a home in the life of men; and every pure soul was inspired by it; and in words, or still better, in actions, strove to give it utterance. 'Believers,' says Tieck, 'sang of Faith; Lovers of Love; Knights described 'knightly actions and battles; and loving, believing knights were 'their chief audience. The Spring, Beauty, Gaiety, were objects 'that could never tire; great duels and deeds of arms carried away 'every hearer, the more surely the stronger they were painted; 'and as the pillars and dome of the Church encircled the flock, so 'did Religion, as the Highest, encircle Poetry and Reality; and 'every heart, in equal love, humbled itself before her.'[2]

Let the reader, we say, fancy all this, and moreover that, as earthly things do, it is all passing away. And now, from this extreme verge of the *Swabian Era*, let us look forward into the inane of the next two centuries, and see whether there also some shadows and dim forms, significant in their kind, may not begin to grow visible. Already, as above indicated, *Reinecke de Fos* rises clear in the distance, as the goal of our survey: let us now, restricting ourselves to the German aspects of the matter, examine what may lie between.

Conrad the Fourth, who died in 1254, was the last of the Swabian Emperors; and Conradin his son, grasping too early at a Southern Crown, perished on the scaffold at Naples in 1268; with which stripling, more fortunate in song than in war, and whose death, or murder, with fourteen years of other cruelty, the *Sicilian Vespers* so frightfully avenged, the imperial line of the Hohenstauffen came to an end. Their House, as we have seen, gives name to a Literary Era; and truly, if dates alone were regarded, we might reckon it much more than a name. For with this change of dynasty, a great change in German Literature begins to indicate itself; the fall of the Hohenstauffen is close followed by the decay of Poetry; as if that fair flowerage and umbrage, which blossomed far and wide round the Swabian Family, had in very deed depended on it for growth and life; and now, the stem being felled, the leaves also were languishing, and soon to wither and drop away. Conradin, as his father and his grandfather had been, was a singer; some lines of his, though he died in his sixteenth year, have even come down to us; but henceforth no crowned poet, except, long afterwards, some few with cheap laurel-crowns, is to be met with: the Gay Science

[2] *Minnelieder aus dem Schwäbischen Zeitalter*, Vorrede, x.

was visibly declining. In such times as now came, the court and the great could no longer patronise it; the polity of the Empire was, by one convulsion after another, all but utterly dismembered; ambitious nobles, a sovereign without power; contention, violence, distress, everywhere prevailing. Richard of Cornwall, who could not so much as keep hold of his sceptre, not to speak of swaying it wisely; or even the brave Rudolf of Hapsburg, who manfully accomplished both these duties, had other work to do than sweet singing. Gay *Wars of the Wartburg* were now changed to stern *Battles of the Marchfeld;* in his leisure hours a good Emperor, instead of twanging harps, has to hammer from his helmet the dints it had got in his working and fighting hours.[3] Amid such rude tumults the Minne-Song could not but change its scene and tone: if, indeed, it continued at all, which, however, it scarcely did; for now, no longer united in courtly choir, it seemed to lose both its sweetness and its force, gradually became mute, or in remote obscure corners lived on, feeble and inaudible, till after several centuries, when under a new title, and with far inferior claims, it again solicits some notice from us.

Doubtless, in this posture of affairs political, the progress of Literature could be little forwarded from without; in some directions, as in that of Court-Poetry, we may admit that it was obstructed or altogether stopped. But why not only Court-Poetry, but Poetry of all sorts should have declined, and as it were gone out, is quite another question; to which, indeed, as men must have their theory on everything, answer has often been attempted, but only with partial success. To most of the German Literary Historians this so ungenial condition of the Court and Government appears enough: by the warlike, altogether practical character of Rudolf, by the imbecile ambition of his successors, by the general prevalence of feuds and lawless disorder, the death of Poetry seems fully accounted for. In which conclusion of theirs, allowing all force to the grounds it rests on, we cannot but perceive that there lurks some fallacy: the fallacy namely, so common in these times,

[3] It was on this famous plain of the Marchfeld that Ottocar, King of Bohemia, conquered Bela of Hungary, in 1260; and was himself, in 1278, conquered and slain by Rudolf of Hapsburg, at that time much left to his own resources; whose talent for mending helmets, however, is perhaps but a poetical tradition. Curious, moreover: it was here again, after more than five centuries, that the House of Hapsburg received its worst overthrow, and from a new and greater Rudolf, namely, from Napoleon, at Wagram, which lies in the middle of this same Marchfeld.

of deducing the inward and spiritual exclusively, from the outward and material; of tacitly, perhaps unconsciously, denying all independent force, or even life, to the former, and looking out for the secret of its vicissitudes solely in some circumstance belonging to the latter. Now it cannot be too often repeated, where it continues still unknown or forgotten, that man has a soul as certainly as he has a body; nay, much more certainly; that properly it is the course of his unseen, spiritual life which informs and rules his external visible life, rather than receives rule from it; in which spiritual life, indeed, and not in any outward action or condition arising from it, the true secret of his history lies, and is to be sought after, and indefinitely approached. Poetry above all, we should have known long ago, is one of those mysterious things whose origin and developments never can be what we call explained; often it seems to us like the wind, blowing where it lists, coming and departing with little or no regard to any the most cunning theory that has yet been devised of it. Least of all does it seem to depend on court-patronage, the form of government, or any modification of politics or economics, catholic as these influences have now become in our philosophy: it lives in a snow-clad sulphurous Iceland, and not in a sunny wine-growing France; flourishes under an arbitrary Elizabeth, and dies out under a constitutional George; Philip II. has his Cervantes, and in prison; Washington and Jackson have only their Coopers and Browns. Why did Poetry appear so brightly after the Battles of Thermopylæ and Salamis, and quite turn away her face and wings from those of Lexington and Bunker's Hill? We answer, the Greeks were a poetical people, the Americans are not; that is to say, it appeared because it did appear! On the whole, we could desire that one of two things should happen: Either that our theories and genetic histories of Poetry should henceforth cease, and mankind rest satisfied, once for all, with Dr. Cabanis' theory, which seems to be the simplest, that 'Poetry is a product of the smaller intestines,' and must be cultivated medically by the exhibition of castor-oil: Or else that, in future speculations of this kind, we should endeavour to start with some recognition of the fact, once well known, and still in words admitted, that Poetry is Inspiration; has in it a certain spirituality and divinity which no dissecting-knife will discover; arises in the most secret and most sacred region of man's soul, as it were in our Holy of Holies; and as for external things, depends only on such as can operate in that region; among which it will be

found that Acts of Parliament, and the state of the Smithfield Markets, nowise play the chief part.

With regard to this change in German Literature especially, it is to be remarked, that the phenomenon was not a German, but a European one; whereby we easily infer so much at least, that the roots of it must have lain deeper than in any change from Hohenstauffen Emperors to Hapsburg ones. For now the Troubadours and Trouvères, as well as the Minnesingers, were sinking into silence; the world seems to have rhymed itself out; those chivalrous roundelays, heroic tales, mythologies, and quaint love-sicknesses, had grown unprofitable to the ear. In fact Chivalry itself was in the wane; and with it that gay melody, like its other pomp. More earnest business, not sportfully, but with harsh endeavour, was now to be done. The graceful minuet-dance of Fancy must give place to the toilsome, thorny pilgrimage of Understanding. Life and its appurtenances and possessions, which had been so admired and besung, now disclosed, the more they came to be investigated, the more contradictions. The Church no longer rose with its pillars, 'like a venerable dome over the united flock;' but, more accurately seen into, was a strait prison, full of unclean creeping things; against which thraldom all better spirits could not but murmur and struggle. Everywhere greatness and littleness seemed so inexplicably blended: Nature, like the Sphinx, her emblem, with her fair woman's face and neck, showed also the claws of a lioness. Now too her Riddle had been propounded; and thousands of subtle, disputatious Schoolmen were striving earnestly to rede it, that they might live, morally live, that the monster might not devour them. These, like strong swimmers, in boundless bottomless vortices of Logic, swam manfully, but could not get to land.

On a better course, yet with the like aim, Physical Science was also unfolding itself. A Roger Bacon, an Albert the Great, are cheering appearances in this era; not blind to the greatness of Nature, yet no longer with poetic reverence of her, but venturing fearlessly into her recesses, and extorting from her many a secret; the first victories of that long series which is to make man more and more her King. Thus everywhere we have the image of contest, of effort. The spirit of man, which once, in peaceful, loving communion with the Universe, had uttered forth its gladness in Song, now feels hampered and hemmed-in, and struggles vehemently to make itself room. Power is the one thing needful,

and that Knowledge which is Power: thus also Intellect becomes the grand faculty, in which all the others are wellnigh absorbed.

Poetry, which has been defined as 'the harmonious unison of Man with Nature,' could not flourish in this temper of the times. The number of poets, or rather versifiers, henceforth greatly diminishes; their style also, and topics, are different and less poetical. Men wish to be practically instructed rather than poetically amused: Poetry itself must assume a preceptorial character, and teach wholesome saws and moral maxims, or it will not be listened to. Singing for the song's sake is now nowhere practised; but in its stead there is everywhere the jar and bustle of argument, investigation, contentious activity. Such throughout the fourteenth century is the general aspect of mind over Europe. In Italy alone is there a splendid exception; the mystic song of Dante, with its stern indignant moral, is followed by the light love-rhymes of Petrarch, the Troubadour of Italy, when this class was extinct elsewhere: the master minds of that country, peculiar in its social and moral condition, still more in its relations to classical Antiquity, pursue a course of their own. But only the master minds; for Italy too has its Dialecticians, and projectors, and reformers; nay, after Petrarch, these take the lead; and there as elsewhere, in their discords and loud assiduous toil, the voice of Poetry dies away.

To search-out the causes of this great revolution, which lie not in Politics nor Statistics, would lead us far beyond our depth. Meanwhile let us remark that the change is nowise to be considered as a relapse, or fall from a higher state of spiritual culture to a lower; but rather, so far as we have objects to compare it with, as a quite natural progress and higher development of culture. In the history of the universal mind, there is a certain analogy to that of the individual. Our first self-consciousness is the first revelation to us of a whole universe, wondrous and altogether good; it is a feeling of joy and new-found strength, of mysterious infinite hope and capability; and in all men, either by word or act, expresses itself poetically. The world without us and within us, beshone by the young light of Love, and all instinct with a divinity, is beautiful and great; it seems for us a boundless happiness that we are privileged to live. This is the season of generous deeds and feelings; which also, on the lips of the gifted, form themselves into musical utterance, and give spoken poetry as well as acted. Nothing is calculated and measured, but all is

loved, believed, appropriated. All action is spontaneous, high sentiment a sure imperishable good; and thus the youth stands, like the First Man, in his fair Garden, giving Names to the bright Appearances of this Universe which he has inherited, and rejoicing in it as glorious and divine. Ere long, however, comes a harsher time. Under the first beauty of man's life appears an infinite, earnest rigour: high sentiment will not avail, unless it can continue to be translated into noble action; which problem, in the destiny appointed for man born to toil, is difficult, interminable, capable of only approximate solution. What flowed softly in melodious coherence when seen and sung from a distance, proves rugged and unmanageable when practically handled. The fervid, lyrical gladness of past years gives place to a collected thoughtfulness and energy; nay often,—so painful, so unexpected are the contradictions everywhere met with,—to gloom, sadness and anger; and not till after long struggles and hard-contested victories is the youth changed into a man.

Without pushing the comparison too far, we may say that in the culture of the European mind, or in Literature which is the symbol and product of this, a certain similarity of progress is manifested. That tuneful Chivalry, that high cheerful devotion to the Godlike in heaven, and to Women, its emblems on earth; those Crusades and vernal Love-songs were the heroic doings of the world's youth; to which also a corresponding manhood succeeded. Poetic recognition is followed by scientific examination: the reign of Fancy, with its gay images, and graceful, capricious sports, has ended; and now Understanding, which when reunited to Poetry, will one day become Reason and a nobler Poetry, has to do its part. Meantime, while there is no such union, but a more and more widening controversy, prosaic discord and the unmusical sounds of labour and effort are alone audible.

The era of the Troubadours, who in Germany are the Minnesingers, gave place in that country, as in all others, to a period which we might name the Didactic; for Literature now ceased to be a festal melody, and addressing itself rather to the intellect than to the heart, became as it were a school-lesson. Instead of that cheerful, warbling Song of Love and Devotion, wherein nothing was taught, but all was believed and worshipped, we have henceforth only wise Apologues, Fables, Satires, Exhortations and all manner of edifying Moralities. Poetry, indeed, continued still to be the form of composition for all that can be named Literature;

except Chroniclers, and others of that genus, valuable not as doers of the work, but as witnesses of the work done, these Teachers all wrote in verse: nevertheless, in general there are few elements of Poetry in their performances; the internal structure has nothing poetical, is a mere business-like prose: in the rhyme alone, at most in the occasional graces of expression, could we discover that it reckoned itself poetical. In fact, we may say that Poetry, in the old sense, had now altogether gone out of sight: instead of our heavenly vesture and Ariel-harp, she had put on earthly weeds, and walked abroad with ferula and horn-book. It was long before this new guise would sit well on her; only in late centuries that she could fashion it into beauty, and learn to move with it, and mount with it, gracefully as of old.

Looking now more specially to our historical task, if we inquire how far into the subsequent time this Didactic Period extended, no precise answer can well be given. On this side there seem no positive limits to it; with many superficial modifications, the same fundamental element pervades all spiritual efforts of mankind through the following centuries. We may say that it is felt even in the Poetry of our own time; nay, must be felt through all time; inasmuch as Inquiry once awakened cannot fall asleep, or exhaust itself; thus Literature must continue to have a didactic character; and the Poet of these days is he who, not indeed by mechanical but by poetical methods, can instruct us, can more and more evolve for us the mystery of our Life. However, after a certain space, this Didactic Spirit in Literature cannot, as a historical partition and landmark, be available here. At the era of the Reformation, it reaches its acme; and, in singular shape, steps forth on the high places of Public Business, and amid storms and thunder, not without brightness and true fire from Heaven, convulsively renovates the world. This is, as it were, the apotheosis of the Didactic Spirit, where it first attains a really poetical concentration, and stimulates mankind into heroism of word, and of action also. Of the latter, indeed, still more than of the former; for not till a much more recent time, almost till our own time, has Inquiry in some measure again reconciled itself to Belief; and Poetry, though in detached tones, arisen on us as a true musical Wisdom. Thus is the deed, in certain circumstances, readier and greater than the word: Action strikes fiery light from the rocks it has to hew through; Poetry reposes in the skyey splendour which that rough passage has led to. But after Luther's day,

this Didactic Tendency again sinks to a lower level; mingles with manifold other tendencies; among which, admitting that it still forms the main stream, it is no longer so preëminent, positive and universal, as properly to characterise the whole. For minor Periods and subdivisions in Literary History, other more superficial characteristics must, from time to time, be fixed on.

Neither, examining the other limit of this Period, can we say specially where it begins; for, as usual in these things, it begins not at once, but by degrees: Kings' reigns and changes in the form of Government have their day and date; not so changes in the spiritual condition of a people. The Minnesinger Period and the Didactic may be said to commingle, as it were, to overlap each other, for above a century: some writers partially belonging to the latter class occur even prior to the times of Friedrich II.; and a certain echo of the Minne-song had continued down to Manesse's day, under Ludwig the Bavarian.

Thus from the Minnesingers to the Church Reformers we have a wide space of between two and three centuries; in which, of course, it is impossible for us to do more than point out one or two of the leading appearances; a minute survey and exposition being foreign from our object.

Among the Minnesingers themselves, as already hinted, there are not wanting some with an occasionally didactic character: Gottfried of Strasburg, known also as a translator of *Sir Tristrem*, and two other Singers, Reinmar von Zweter and Walter von der Vogelweide, are noted in this respect; the last two especially, for their oblique glances at the Pope and his Monks, the unsound condition of which body could not escape even a Love-minstrel's eye.[4] But perhaps the special step of transition may be still

[4] Reinmar von Zweter, for example, says once:

Har und bart nach klosterzitten gesnitten
Des vind ich genuog,
Ich vinde aber der nit vil dies rehte tragen;
Halb visch halb man ist visch noch man,
Gar visch ist visch, gar man ist man,
Als ich erkennen kan:
Von hofmunchen und von klosterrittern
Kan ich niht gesagen:
Hofmunchen, klosterrittern, diesen beiden
Wolt ich reht ze rehte wol bescheiden,
Ob sie sich wolten lassen vinden,
Da sie ze rehte solten wesen;

better marked in the works of a rhymer named the *Stricker*, whose province was the epic, or narrative; into which he seems to have introduced this new character in unusual measure. As the *Stricker* still retains some shadow of a place in Literary History, the following notice of him may be borrowed here. Of his personal history, it may be premised, nothing whatever is known; not even why he bears this title; unless it be, as some have fancied, that *Stricker*, which now signifies *Knitter*, in those days meant *Schreiber* (Writer):

'In truth,' says Bouterwek, 'this painstaking man was more a writer than a Poet, yet not altogether without talent in that latter way. Voluminous enough, at least, in his redaction of an older epic work on the *War of Charlemagne with the Saracens in Spain*, the old German original of which is perhaps nothing more than a translation from the Latin or French. Of a Poet in the Stricker's day, when the romantic epos had attained such polish among the Germans, one might have expected that this ancient Fiction, since he was pleased to remodel it, would have served as the material to a new poetic creation; or at least, that he would have breathed into it some new and more poetic spirit. But such a development of these Charlemagne Fables was reserved for the *Italian* Poets. The Stricker has not only left the matter of the old

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In kloster munche solten genesen,
So suln des hofs sich ritter unterwinden.

Hair and beard cut in the cloister fashion,
Of this I find enough,
But of those that wear it well I find not many;
Half-fish half-man is neither fish nor man,
Whole fish is fish, whole man is man,
As I discover can:
Of court-monks and of cloister-knights
Can I not speak:
Court-monks, cloister-knights, these both
Would I rightly put to rights,
Whether they would let themselves be found
Where they by right should be;
In their cloister monks should flourish,
And knights obey at court.

See also in Flögel (*Geschichte der komischen Litteratur*, b. iii. s. 11), immediately following this Extract, a formidable dinner-course of *Lies*,—boiled lies, roasted lies, lies with saffron, forced-meat lies, and other varieties, arranged by this same artist;—farther (in page 9), a rather gallant onslaught from Walter von der Vogelweide, on the *Babest* (Pope, *Papst*) himself. All this was before the middle of the thirteenth century.

Tale almost unaltered, but has even brought out its unpoetical lineaments in stronger light. The fanatical piety with which it is overloaded probably appeared to him its chief merit. To convert these castaway Heathens, or failing this, to annihilate them, Charlemagne takes the field. Next to him, the hero Roland plays a main part there. Consultations are held, ambassadors negotiate; war breaks out with all its terrors: the Heathen fight stoutly: at length comes the well-known defeat of the Franks at Ronceval, or Roncevaux; where, however, the Saracens also lose so many men that their King Marsilies dies of grief. The Narrative is divided into chapters, each chapter again into sections, an epitome of which is always given at the outset. Miracles occur in the story, but for most part only such as tend to evince how God himself inspirited the Christians against the Heathen. Of anything like free, bold flights of imagination there is little to be met with: the higher features of the genuine romantic epos are altogether wanting. In return, it has a certain didactic temper, which, indeed, announces itself even in the Introduction. The latter, it should be added, prepossesses us in the Poet's favour, testifying with what warm interest the noble and great in man's life affected him.'[5]

The *Wälsche Gast* (Italian Guest) of Zirkler or Tirkeler, who professes, truly or not, to be from Friuli, and, as a benevolent stranger, or *Guest*, tells the Germans hard truths somewhat in the spirit of Juvenal; even the famous *Meister Freidank* (Master Freethought), with his wise Book of rhymed Maxims, entitled *Die Bescheidenheit* (Modesty); still more the sagacious *Tyro King of Scots*, quite omitted in history, but who teaches *Friedebrand his Son*, with some discrimination, how to choose a good priest;—all these, with others of still thinner substance, rise before us only as faint shadows, and must not linger in our field of vision. Greatly the most important figure in the earlier part of this era is Hugo von Trimberg, to whom we must now turn; author of various poetico-preceptorial works, one of which, named the *Renner* (Runner), has long been known not only to antiquarians, but, in some small degree, even to the general reader. Of Hugo's Biography he has himself incidentally communicated somewhat. His surname he derives from Trimberg, his birthplace, a village on the Saale, not far from Würzburg, in Franconia. By profession he

[5] Bouterwek, ix. 245. Other versified Narratives by this worthy *Stricker* still exist, but for the most part only in manuscript. Of these the History of *Wilhelm von Blumethal*, a Round-table adventurer, appears to be the principal. The Poem on Charlemagne stands printed in Schilter's *Thesaurus;* its exact date is matter only of conjecture.

appears to have been a Schoolmaster: in the conclusion of his *Renner*, he announces that 'he kept school for forty years at Thürstadt, near Bamberg;' farther, that his Book was finished in 1300, which date he confirms by other local circumstances.

Der dies Buch gedichtet hat,
Vierzig jar vor Babenberg,
Der pflag der schulen zu Thürstat.
Und hiess Hugo von Trymberg.
Es ward follenbracht das ist wahr,
Da tausent und dreyhundert jar
Nach Christus Geburt vergangen waren,
Drithalbs jar gleich vor den jaren
Da die Juden in Franken wurden erschlagen.
Bey der zeit und in den tagen,
Da bischoff Leupolt bischoff was
Zu Babenberg.

Some have supposed that the Schoolmaster dignity, claimed here, refers not to actual wielding of the birch, but to a Mastership and practice of instructing in the art of Poetry, which about this time began to have its scholars and even guild-brethren, as the feeble remnants of Minne-song gradually took the new shape, in which we afterwards see it, of *Meistergesang* (Master-song): but for this hypothesis, so plain are Hugo's own words, there seems little foundation. It is uncertain whether he was a clerical personage, certain enough that he was not a monk: at all events, he must have been a man of reading and knowledge; industrious in study, and superior in literary acquirement to most in that time. By a collateral account, we find that he had gathered a library of two hundred Books, among which were a whole dozen by himself, five in Latin, seven in German; hoping that by means of these, and the furtherance they would yield in the pedagogic craft, he might live at ease in his old days; in which hope, however, he had been disappointed; seeing, as himself rather feelingly complains, 'no one now cares to study knowledge (*Kunst*), which, nevertheless, deserves honour and favour.' What these twelve Books of Hugo's own writing were, can, for most part, only be conjectured. Of one, entitled the *Sammler* (Collector), he himself makes mention in the *Renner*: he had begun it above thirty years before this latter: but having by ill accident lost great part of his manuscript, abandoned it in anger. Of another work Flögel has

discovered the following notice in Johann Wolf: 'About this time '(1599) did that virtuous and learned nobleman, Conrad von 'Liebenstein, present to me a manuscript of Hugo von Trimberg, 'who flourished about the year 1300. It sets forth the short-'comings of all ranks, and especially complains of the clergy. It 'is entitled *Reu ins Land* (Repentance to the Land): and now 'lies with the Lord of Zillhart.'[6] The other ten appear to have vanished even to the last vestige.

Such is the whole sum-total of information which the assiduity of commentators has collected touching worthy Hugo's life and fortunes. Pleasant it were to see him face to face; gladly would we penetrate through that long vista of five hundred years, and peep into his book-presses, his frugal fireside, his noisy mansion with its disobedient urchins, now that it is all grown so silent: but the distance is too far, the intervening medium intercepts our light; only in uncertain, fluctuating dusk will Hugo and his environment appear to us. Nevertheless Hugo, as he had in Nature, has in History an immortal part: as to his inward man, we can still see that he was no mere bookworm, or simple Parson Adams; but of most observant eye; shrewd, inquiring, considerate, who from his Thürstadt school-chair, as from a *sedes exploratoria*, had looked abroad into the world's business, and formed his own theory about many things. A cheerful, gentle heart had been given him; a quiet sly humour; light to see beyond the garments and outer hulls of Life into Life itself: the long-necked purse, the threadbare gabardine, the languidly-simmering pot of his pedagogic household establishment were a small matter to him: he was a man to look on these things with a meek smile; to nestle down quietly, as the lark, in the lowest furrow; nay to mount therefrom singing, and soar above all mere earthly heights. How many potentates and principalities and proud belligerents have evaporated into utter oblivion, while the poor Thürstadt Schoolmaster still holds together!

This *Renner*, which seems to be his final work, probably comprises the essence of all those lost Volumes; and indeed a synopsis of Hugo's whole Philosophy of Life, such as his two hundred Books and long decades of quiet observation and reflection had taught him. Why it has been named the *Renner*, whether by Hugo himself, or by some witty Editor and Transcriber, there are two guesses forthcoming, and no certain reason. One guess is,

[6] Flögel (iii. 15), who quotes for it *Wolfii Lexicon Memorab.* t. ii. p. 1061.

that this Book was to *run* after the lost Tomes, and make good to mankind the deficiency occasioned by want of them; which happy-thought, hide-bound though it be, might have seemed sprightly enough to Hugo and that age. The second guess is, that our Author, in the same style of easy wit, meant to say, this Book must *hasten* and run out into the world, and do him a good turn quickly, while it was yet time, he being so very old. But leaving this, we may remark, with certainty enough, that what we have left of Hugo was first printed under this title of *Renner*, at Frankfort-on-Mayn, in 1549; and quite incorrectly, being modernised to all lengths, and often without understanding of the sense; the Edition moreover is now rare, and Lessing's project of a new one did not take effect; so that, except in Manuscripts, of which there are many, and in printed Extracts, which also are numerous, the *Renner* is to most readers a sealed book.

In regard to its literary merit opinions seem to be nearly unanimous. The highest merit, that of poetical unity, or even the lower merit of logical unity, is not ascribed to it by the warmest panegyrist. Apparently this work had been a sort of store-chest, wherein the good Hugo had, from time to time, deposited the fruits of his meditation as they chanced to ripen for him; here a little, and there a little, in all varieties of kind; till the chest being filled, or the fruits nearly exhausted, it was sent forth and published to the world, by the easy process of turning up the bottom.

'No theme,' says Bouterwek, 'leads with certainty to the other: satirical descriptions, proverbs, fables, jests and other narratives, all huddled together at random, to teach us in a poetical way a series of moral lessons. A strained and frosty Allegory opens the work; then follow the Chapters of *Meyden* (Maids); of Wicked Masters; of Pages; of Priests, Monks and Friars, with great minuteness; then of a Young Minx with an Old Man; then of Bad Landlords, and of Robbers. Next come divers Virtues and Vices, all painted out, and judged of. Towards the end there follows a sort of Moral Natural History; Considerations on the dispositions of various Animals; a little Botany and Physiology; then again all manner of didactic Narratives; and finally a Meditation on the Last Day.'

Whereby it would appear clearly, as hinted, that Hugo's *Renner* pursues no straight course; and only through the most labyrinthic mazes, here wandering in deep thickets, or even sinking in moist

bogs, there panting over mountain-tops by narrow sheep-tracks; but for most part jigging lightly on sunny greens, accomplishes his wonderful journey.

Nevertheless, as we ourselves can testify, there is a certain charm in the worthy man; his Work, such as it is, seems to flow direct from the heart, in natural, spontaneous abundance; is at once cheerful and earnest; his own simple, honest, mildly decided character is everywhere visible. Besides, Hugo, as we said, is a person of understanding; has looked over many provinces of Life, not without insight; in his quiet, sly way, can speak forth a shrewd word on occasion. There is a genuine though slender vein of Humour in him; nor in his satire does he ever lose temper, but rebukes sportfully; not indeed laughing aloud, scarcely even sardonically smiling, yet with a certain subdued roguery and patriarchal knowingness. His fancy too, if not brilliant, is copious almost beyond measure; no end to his crotchets, suppositions, minute specifications. Withal he is original: his maxims, even when professedly borrowed, have passed through the test of his own experience; all carries in it some stamp of his personality. Thus the *Renner*, though in its whole extent perhaps too boundless and planless for ordinary nerves, makes in the fragmentary state no unpleasant reading: that old doggerel is not without significance; often in its straggling, broken, entangled strokes some vivid antique picture is strangely brought out for us.

As a specimen of Hugo's general manner, we select a small portion of his Chapter on *The Maidens;* that passage where he treats of the highest enterprise a maiden can engage in, the choosing of a husband. It will be seen at once that Hugo is no Minnesinger, glozing his fair audience with madrigals and hypocritical gallantry; but a quiet Natural Historian, reporting such facts as he finds, in perfect good nature, it is true, yet not without an under-current of satirical humour. His quaint style of thought, his garrulous minuteness of detail are partly apparent here. The first few lines we may give in the original also; not as they stand in the Frankfort Edition, but as professing to derive themselves from a genuine ancient source:

Kortzyn mut und lange haar
han die meyde sunderbar
dy zu yren jaren kommen synt
dy wal machen yn daz hertze blynt

dy auchgn wysen yn den weg
von den auchgn get eyn steg
tzu dem hertzen nit gar lang
uff deme stege ist vyl mannig gedang
wen sy woln nemen oder nit.[1]

Short of sense and long of hair,
Strange enough the maidens are;
Once they to their teens have got,
Such a choosing, this or that:
Eyes they have that ever spy,
From the Eyes a Path doth lie
To the Heart, and is not long,
Hereon travel thoughts a throng,
Which one they will have or not.

'Woe's me,' continues Hugo, 'how often this same is repeated; till they grow all confused how to choose, from so many, whom they have brought in without number. First they bethink them so: This one is short, that one is long; he is courtly and old, the other young and ill-favoured; this is lean, that is bald; here is one fat, there one thin; this is noble, that is weak; he never yet broke a spear: one is white, another black; that other is named Master Hack (*hartz*); this is pale, that again is red; he seldom eateth cheerful bread;'

and so on, through endless other varieties, in new streams of soft-murmuring doggerel, whereon, as on the Path it would represent, do travel thoughts a throng, which one these fair irresolutes will have or not.

Thus, for Hugo, the age of Minstrelsy is gone: not soft Love-ditties, and hymns of Lady-worship, but sceptical criticism, importunate animadversion, not without a shade of mockery, will he indite. The age of Chivalry is gone also. To a Schoolmaster, with empty larder, the pomp of tournaments could never have been specially interesting; but now such passages of arms, how free and gallant soever, appear to him no other than the probable product of delirium. 'God might well laugh, could it be,' says he, 'to see his mannikins 'live so wondrously on this Earth: two of them will take to fighting, 'and nowise let it alone; nothing serves but with two long spears 'they must ride and stick at one another: greatly to their hurt; for 'when one is by the other skewered through the bowels or through 'the weasand, he hath small profit thereby. But who forced them

[1] Horn, *Geschichte und Kritik der deutschen Poesie*, s. 44.

'to such straits?' The answer is too plain: some modification of Insanity. Nay, so contemptuous is Hugo of all chivalrous things, that he openly grudges any time spent in reading of them; in Don Quixote's Library he would have made short work:

> How Master Dietrich fought with Ecken,
> And how of old the stalwart Recken
> Were all by women's craft betrayed:
> Such things you oft hear sung and said,
> And wept at, like a case of sorrow;—
> Of our own Sins we'll think tomorrow.

This last is one of Hugo's darker strokes; for commonly, though moral perfection is ever the one thing needful with him, he preaches in a quite cheerful tone; nay, ever and anon, enlivens us with some timely joke. Considerable part, and apparently much the best part, of his work is occupied with satirical Fables, and *Schwänke* (jests, comic tales); of which latter class we have seen some possessing true humour, and the simplicity which is their next merit. These, however, we must wholly omit; and indeed, without farther parleying, here part company with Hugo. We leave him, not without esteem, and a touch of affection, due to one so true-hearted, and, under that old humble guise, so gifted with intellectual talent. Safely enough may be conceded him the dignity of chief moral Poet of his time; nay perhaps, for his solid character, and modest manly ways, a much higher dignity. Though his Book can no longer be considered, what the Frankfort Editor describes it in his interminable title-page, as a universal *vade-mecum* for mankind, it is still 'so adorned with many fine sayings,' and in itself of so curious a texture, that it seems well worth preserving. A proper Edition of the *Renner* will one day doubtless make its appearance among the Germans. Hugo is farther remarkable as the precursor and prototype of Sebastian Brandt, whose *Narrenschiff* (Ship of Fools) has, with perhaps less merit, had infinitely better fortune than the *Renner*.

Some half century later in date, and no less didactic in character than Hugo's *Renner*, another Work, still rising visible above the level of those times, demands some notice from us. This is the *Edelstein* (Gem) of Bonerius or Boner, which at one time, to judge by the number of Manuscripts, whereof fourteen are still in existence, must have enjoyed great popularity; and indeed, after long years

of oblivion, it has, by recent critics and redactors, been again brought into some circulation. Boner's *Gem* is a collection of a Hundred Fables done into German rhyme; and derives its proud designation not more perhaps from the supposed excellence of the work than from a witty allusion to the title of Fable First, which, in the chief Manuscript, chances to be that well-known one of the Cock scraping for Barleycorns, and finding instead thereof a precious stone (*Edelstein*) or Gem: *Von einem Hanen und dem edelen Steine;* whereupon the author, or some kind friend, remarks in a sort of Prologue:

> *Dies Büchlein mag der Edelstein*
> *Wol heiszen, wand es in treit* (in sich trägt)
> *Bischaft* (Beispiel) *manger kluogheit.*

'This Bookling may well be called the Gem, sith it includes 'examples of many a prudence;'—which name accordingly, as we see, it bears even to this day.

Boner and his Fables have given rise to much discussion among the Germans: scattered at short distances throughout the last hundred years, there is a series of Selections, Editions, Translations, Critical Disquisitions, some of them in the shape of Academic Program; among the labourers in which enterprise we find such men as Gellert and Lessing. A *Bonerii Gemma,* or Latin version of the work, was published by Oberlin, in 1782; Eschenburg sent forth an Edition in modern German, in 1810; Benecke a reprint of the antique original, in 1816. So that now a faithful duty has been done to Boner; and what with bibliographical inquiries, what with vocabularies, and learned collations of texts, he that runs may read whatever stands written in the *Gem.*

Of these diligent lucubrations, with which we strangers are only in a remote degree concerned, it will be sufficient here to report in few words the main results,—not indeed very difficult to report. First, then, with regard to Boner himself, we have to say that nothing whatever has been discovered: who, when, or what that worthy moralist was, remains, and may always remain, entirely uncertain. It is merely conjectured, from the dialect, and other more minute indications, that his place of abode was the north-west quarter of Switzerland; with still higher probability, that he lived about the middle of the fourteenth century; from his learning and devout pacific temper, some have inferred that he was a monk or priest; however, in one Manuscript of his *Gem,* he

is designated, apparently by some ignorant Transcriber, a knight, *ein Ritter gotz alsus:* from all which, as above said, our only conclusion is, that nothing can be concluded.

Johann Scherz, about the year 1710, in what he called *Philosophiæ moralis Germanorum medii ævi Specimen*, sent forth certain of these Fables, with expositions, but apparently without naming the Author; to which *Specimen*, Gellert in his *Dissertatio de Poesi Apologorum* had again, some forty years afterwards, invited attention. Nevertheless, so total was the obscurity which Boner had fallen into, that Bodmer, already known as the resuscitator of the *Nibelungen Lied*, in printing the *Edelstein* from an old Manuscript, in 1752, mistook its probable date by about a century, and gave his work the title of *Fables from the Minnesinger Period*,[8] without naming the Fabulist, or guessing whether there were one or many. In this condition stood the matter, when several years afterwards, Lessing, pursuing another inquiry, came across the track of this Boner; was allured into it; proceeded to clear it; and moving briskly forward, with a sure eye and sharp critical axe, hewed away innumerable entanglements; and so opened out a free avenue and vista, where strangely, in remote depth of antiquarian woods, the whole ancient Fable-manufactory, with Boner and many others working in it, becomes visible, in all the light which probably will ever be admitted to it. He who has perplexed himself with *Romulus and Rimicius*, and Nevelet's *Anonymus* and *Avianus*, and still more, with the false guidance of their many commentators, will find help and deliverance in this light, thoroughgoing Inquiry of Lessing's.[9]

Now, therefore, it became apparent: first, that those supposed *Fables from the Minnesinger Period*, of Bodmer, were in truth written by one Boner, in quite another Period; secondly, that Boner was not properly the author of them, but the borrower and free versifier from certain Latin originals; farther, that the real title was *Edelstein;* and strangest of all, that the work had been printed three centuries before Bodmer's time, namely, at Bamberg, in 1461; of which Edition, indeed, a tattered copy, typographically curious, lay, and probably lies, in the Wolfenbüttel Library, where Lessing then waited, and wrote. The other discoveries, touching

[8] Koch also, with a strange deviation from his usual accuracy, dates Boner, in one place, 1220; and in another, 'towards the latter half of the fourteenth century.' See his *Compendium*, pp. 28 and 200, vol. i.

[9] *Sämmtliche Schriften*, b. viii.

Boner's personality and locality, are but conjectures, due also to Lessing, and have been stated already.

As to the *Gem* itself, about which there has been such scrambling, we may say, now when it is cleaned and laid out before us, that, though but a small seed-pearl, it has a genuine value. To us Boner is interesting by his antiquity, as the speaking witness of many long-past things; to his contemporaries again he must have been still more interesting as the reporter of so many new things. These Fables of his, then for the first time rendered out of inaccessible Latin[10] into German metre, contain no little edifying matter, had we not known it before; our old friends, the Fox with the musical Raven; the Man and Boy taking their Ass to market, and so inadequate to please the public in their method of transporting him; the Bishop that gave his Nephew a Cure of Souls, but durst not trust him with a Basket of Pears; all these and many more figure here. But apart from the material of his Fables, Boner's style and manner has an abiding merit. He is not so much a Translator as a free Imitator: he tells the story in his own way; appends his own moral, and, except that in the latter department he is apt to be a little prolix, acquits himself to high satisfaction. His narrative, in those old limping rhymes, is cunningly enough brought out: artless, lively, graphic, with a spicing of innocent humour, a certain childlike archness, which is the chief merit of a Fable. Such is the German Æsop; a character whom in the northwest district of Switzerland, at that time of day, we should hardly have looked for.

Could we hope that to many of our readers the old rough dialect of Boner would be intelligible, it were easy to vindicate these

[10] The two originals to whom Lessing has traced all his Fables are *Avianus* and Nevelet's *Anonymus*; concerning which personages the following brief notice by Jördens (*Lexicon*, i. 161) may be inserted here: 'Flavius Avianus '(who must not be confounded with another Latin Poet, *Avienus*) lived, as is 'believed, under the two Antonines in the second century: he has left us 'forty-two Fables in elegiac measure, the best Editions of which are that by 'Kannegiesser (Amsterdam, 1731), that by' &c. &c. With respect to the *Anonymus* again: 'Under this designation is understood the half-barbarous 'Latin Poet, whose sixty Fables, in elegiac measure, stand in the collection, 'which Nevelet, under the title *Mythologia Æsopica*, published at Frankfort 'in 1610, and which directly follow those of Avianus in that work. They are 'nothing else than versified translations of the Fables written in prose by '*Romulus*, a noted Fabulist, whose era cannot be fixed, nor even his name 'made out to complete satisfaction.'—The reader who wants deeper insight into these matters may consult Lessing, as cited above.

praises. As matters stand, we can only venture on one translated specimen, which in this shape claims much allowance; the Fable, also, is nowise the best, or perhaps the worst, but simply one of the shortest. For the rest, we have rendered the old doggerel into new, with all possible fidelity:

THE FROG AND THE STEER.

Of him that striveth after more honour than he should.

A Frog with Frogling by his side
Came hopping through the plain, one tide:
There he an Ox at grass did spy,
Much anger'd was the Frog thereby;
He said: "Lord God, what was my sin
Thou madest me so small and thin?
Likewise I have no handsome feature,
And all dishonoured is my nature,
To other creatures far and near,
For instance, this same grazing Steer."
The Frog would fain with Bullock cope,
'Gan brisk outblow himself in hope.
Then spake his Frogling: "Father o' me,
It boots not, let thy blowing be;
Thy nature hath forbid this battle,
Thou canst not vie with the black-cattle."
Nathless let be the Frog would not,
Such prideful notion had he got;
Again to blow right sore 'gan he,
And said: "Like Ox could I but be
In size, within this world there were
No Frog so glad, to thee I swear."
The Son spake: "Father, me is woe
Thou shouldst torment thy body so,
I fear thou art to lose thy life;
Come follow me and leave this strife;
Good Father, take advice of me,
And let thy boastful blowing be."
Frog said: "Thou needst not beck and nod,
I will not do't, so help me God;
Big as this Ox is I must turn,
Mine honour now it doth concern."
He blew himself, and burst in twain,
Such of that blowing was his gain.

The like hath oft been seen of such
Who grasp at honour overmuch;
They must with none at all be doing,
But sink full soon and come to ruin.
He that, with wind of Pride accurs'd,
Much puffs himself, will surely burst;
He men miswishes and misjudges,
Inferiors scorns, superiors grudges,
Of all his equals is a hater,
Much griev'd he is at any better;
Wherefore it were a sentence wise
Were his whole body set with Eyes,
Who envy hath, to see so well
What lucky hap each man befell,
That so he filled were with fury,
And burst asunder in a hurry;
And so full soon betid him this
Which to the Frog betided is.

Readers to whom such stinted twanging of the true Poetic Lyre, such cheerful fingering, though only of one and its lowest string, has any melody, may find enough of it in Benecke's *Boner*, a reproduction, as above stated, of the original *Edelstein;* which Edition we are authorised to recommend as furnished with all helps for such a study: less adventurous readers may still, from Eschenburg's half-modernised Edition, derive some contentment and insight.

Hugo von Trimberg and Boner, who stand out here as our chief Literary representatives of the Fourteenth Century, could play no such part in their own day, when the great men who shone in the world's eye were Theologians and Jurists, Politicians at the Imperial Diet; at best, Professors in the new Universities; of whom all memory has long since perished. So different is universal from temporary importance, and worth belonging to our manhood from that merely of our station or calling. Nevertheless, as every writer, of any true gifts, is 'citizen both of his time and of his country,' and the more completely the greater his gifts; so in the works of these two secluded individuals the characteristic tendencies and spirit of their age may best be discerned.

Accordingly, in studying their commentators, one fact that cannot but strike us is, the great prevalence and currency which this species of Literature, cultivated by them, had obtained in that

era. Of Fable Literature especially, this was the summer-tide and highest efflorescence. The Latin originals which Boner partly drew from, descending, with manifold transformations and additions, out of classical times, were in the hands of the learned; in the living memories of the people were numerous fragments of primeval Oriental Fable, derived perhaps through Palestine; from which two sources, curiously intermingled, a whole stream of Fables evolved itself; whereat the morally athirst, such was the genius of that time, were not slow to drink. Boner, as we have seen, worked in a field then zealously cultivated: nay, was not Æsop himself, what we have for Æsop, a contemporary of his; the Greek Monk Planudes and the Swiss Monk Boner might be chanting their Psalter at one and the same hour!

Fable, indeed, may be regarded as the earliest and simplest product of Didactic Poetry, the first attempt of Instruction clothing itself in Fancy: hence the antiquity of Fables, their universal diffusion in the childhood of nations, so that they have become a common property of all: hence also their acceptance and diligent culture among the Germans, among the Europeans, in this the first stage of an era when the whole bent of Literature was Didactic. But the Fourteenth Century was the age of Fable in a still wider sense: it was the age when whatever Poetry there remained took the shape of Apologue and moral Fiction: the higher spirit of Imagination had died away, or withdrawn itself into Religion; the lower and feebler not only took continual counsel of Understanding, but was content to walk in its leading-strings. Now was the time when human life and its relations were looked at with an earnest practical eye; and the moral perplexities that occur there, when man, hemmed-in between the Would and the Should, or the Must, painfully hesitates, or altogether sinks in that collision, were not only set forth in the way of precept, but embodied, for still clearer instruction, in Examples, and edifying Fictions. The Monks themselves, such of them as had any talent, meditated and taught in this fashion: witness that strange *Gesta Romanorum*, still extant, and once familiar over all Europe;—a Collection of Moral Tales, expressly devised for the use of Preachers, though only the Shakspeares, and in subsequent times, turned it to right purpose.[11] These and the like old *Gests*, with most of which the *Romans* had so little to do, were the staple Literature of that period; cultivated

[11] See an account of this curious Book in Douce's learned and ingenious *Illustrations of Shakspeare*.

with great assiduity, and so far as mere invention, or compilation, of incident goes, with no little merit; for already almost all the grand destinies, and fundamental ever-recurring entanglements of human life are laid hold of and depicted here; so that, from the first, our modern Novelists and Dramatists could find nothing new under the sun, but everywhere, in contrivance of their Story, saw themselves forestalled. The boundless abundance of Narratives then current, the singular derivations and transmigrations of these, surprise antiquarian commentators: but, indeed, it was in this same century that Boccaccio, refining the gold from that so copious dross, produced his *Decamerone*, which still indicates the same fact in more pleasant fashion, to all readers. That in these universal tendencies of the time the Germans participated and coöperated, Boner's Fables, and Hugo's many Narrations, serious and comic, may, like two specimens from a great multitude, point out to us. The Madrigal had passed into the Apologue; the Heroic Poem, with its supernatural machinery and sentiment, into the Fiction of practical Life: in which latter species a prophetic eye might have discerned the coming *Tom Joneses* and *Wilhelm Meisters;* and with still more astonishment, the *Minerva Presses* of all nations, and this their huge transit-trade in Rags, all lifted from the dunghill, printed on, and returned thither, to the comfort of parties interested.

The Drama, as is well known, had an equally Didactic origin; namely, in those *Mysteries* contrived by the clergy for bringing home religious truth, with new force, to the universal comprehension. That this cunning device had already found its way into Germany, we have proof in a document too curious to be omitted here:

'In the year 1322 there was a play shown at Eisenach, which had a tragical enough effect. Markgraf Friedrich of Misnia, Landgraf also of Thuringia, having brought his tedious warfares to a conclusion, and the country beginning now to revive under peace, his subjects were busy repaying themselves for the past distresses by all manner of diversions; to which end, apparently by the Sovereign's order, a dramatic representation of the *Ten Virgins* was schemed, and at Eisenach, in his presence, duly executed. This happened fifteen days after Easter, by indulgence of the Preaching Friars. In the *Chronicon Sampetrinum* stands recorded that the play was enacted in the Beargarden (*in horto ferarum*), by the clergy and their scholars. But now, when it came to pass that the Wise Virgins would give the Foolish no oil, and these latter were shut out

from the Bridegroom, they began to weep bitterly, and called on the Saints to intercede for them; who, however, even with Mary at their head, could effect nothing from God; but the Foolish Virgins were all sentenced to damnation. Which things the Landgraf seeing and hearing, he fell into a doubt, and was very angry; and said, "What then is the Christian Faith, if God will not take pity on us, for intercession of Mary and all the Saints?" In this anger he continued five days; and the learned men could hardly enlighten him to understand the Gospel. Thereupon he was struck with apoplexy, and became speechless and powerless; in which sad state he continued bed-rid two years and seven months, and so died, being then fifty-five.'[12]

Surely a serious warning, would they but take it, to Dramatic Critics, not to venture beyond their depth! Had this fiery old Landgraf given up the reins of his imagination into his author's hands, he might have been pleased he knew not why: whereas the meshes of Theology, in which he kicks and struggles, here strangle the life out of him; and the Ten Virgins at Eisenach are more fatal to warlike men than Æschylus's Furies at Athens were to weak women.

Neither were the unlearned People without their Literature, their Narrative Poetry; though how, in an age without printing and bookstalls, it was circulated among them; whether by strolling *Fidelers* (Minstrels), who might recite as well as fiddle, or by other methods, we have not learned. However, its existence and abundance in this era is sufficiently evinced by the multitude of *Volksbücher* (People's-Books) which issued from the Press, next century, almost as soon as there was a Press. Several of these, which still languidly survive among the people, or at least the children, of all countries, were of German composition; of most, so strangely had they been sifted and winnowed to and fro, it was impossible to fix the origin. But borrowed or domestic, they nowhere wanted admirers in Germany: the *Patient Helena*, the *Fair Magelone*, *Bluebeard*, *Fortunatus*; these, and afterwards the *Seven Wise Masters*, with other more directly Æsopic ware, to which the introduction of the old Indian stock, or *Book of Wisdom*, translated from John of Capua's Latin,[13] one day formed a rich accession, were in all memories and on all tongues.

[12] Flögel (*Geschichte der komischen Litteratur*, iv. 287), who founds on that old *Chronicon Sampetrinum Erfurtense*, contained in Menke's Collection.

[13] In 1483, by command of a certain Eberhard, Duke of Würtemberg. What relation this old *Book of Wisdom* bears to our actual *Pilpay* we have not learned.

Beautiful traits of Imagination and a pure genuine feeling, though under the rudest forms, shine forth in some of these old Tales: for instance, in *Magelone* and *Fortunatus;* which two, indeed, with others of a different stamp, Ludwig Tieck has, with singular talent, ventured, not unsuccessfully, to reproduce in our own time and dialect. A second class distinguish themselves by a homely, honest-hearted Wisdom, full of character and quaint devices; of which class the *Seven Wise Masters*, extracted chiefly from that *Gesta Romanorum* above mentioned, and containing 'proverb-philosophy, anecdotes, fables and jests, the seeds of 'which, on the fertile German soil, spread luxuriantly through 'several generations,' is perhaps the best example. Lastly, in a third class, we find in full play that spirit of broad drollery, of rough saturnine Humour, which the Germans claim as a special characteristic; among these, we must not omit to mention the *Schiltbürger*, correspondent to our own *Wise Men of Gotham;* still less, the far-famed *Tyll Eulenspiegel* (Tyll Owlglass) whese rogueries and waggeries belong, in the fullest sense, to this era.

This last is a true German work; for both the man Tyll Eulenspiegel, and the Book which is his history, were produced there. Nevertheless, Tyll's fame has gone abroad into all lands: this, the Narrative of his exploits, has been published in innumerable editions, even with all manner of learned glosses, and translated into Latin, English, French, Dutch, Polish; nay, in several languages, as in his own, an *Eulenspiegelerei*, an *Espièglerie*, or dog's-trick, so named after him, still, by consent of lexicographers, keeps his memory alive. We may say, that to few mortals has it been granted to earn such a place in Universal History as Tyll: for now after five centuries, when Wallace's birthplace is unknown even to the Scots; and the Admirable Crichton still more rapidly is grown a shadow; and Edward Longshanks sleeps unregarded save by a few antiquarian English,—Tyll's native village is pointed out with pride to the traveller, and his tombstone, with a sculptured pun on his name, an Owl, namely, and a Glass, still stands, or pretends to stand, 'at Möllen, near Lübeck,' where, since 1350, his once nimble bones have been at rest. Tyll, in the calling he had chosen, naturally led a wandering life, as place after place became too hot for him; by which means he saw into many things with his own eyes: having been not only over all Westphalia and Saxony, but even in Poland, and as far as Rome. That in his old

days, like other great men, he became an Autobiographer, and in trustful winter evenings, not on paper, but on air, and to the laughter-lovers of Möllen, composed this work himself, is purely a hypothesis; certain only that it came forth originally in the dialect of this region, namely the *Platt-Deutsch;* and was therefrom translated, probably about a century afterwards, into its present High German, as Lessing conjectures, by one Thomas Mürner, who on other grounds is not unknown to antiquaries. For the rest, write it who might, the Book is here, 'abounding,' as a wise Critic remarks, 'in inventive humour, in rough merri-'ment and broad drollery, not without a keen rugged shrewdness 'of insight; which properties must have made it irresistibly cap-'tivating to the popular sense; and, with all its fantastic extra-'vagancies and roguish crotchets, in many points instructive.'

From Tyll's so captivating achievements we shall here select one to insert some account of; the rather as the tale is soon told, and by means of it we catch a little trait of manners, and, through Tyll's spectacles, may peep into the interior of a Household, even of a Parsonage, in those old days.

'It chanced after so many adventures, that Eulenspiegel came to a Parson, who promoted him to be his Sacristan, or as we now say, Sexton. Of this Parson it is recorded that he kept a Concubine, who had but one eye; she also had a spite at Tyll, and was wont to speak evil of him to his master, and report his rogueries. Now while Eulenspiegel held this Sextoncy the Easter-season came, and there was to be a play set forth of the Resurrection of our Lord. And as the people were not learned, and could not read, the Parson took his Concubine and stationed her in the holy Sepulchre by way of Angel. Which thing Eulenspiegel seeing, he took to him three of the simplest persons that could be found there, to enact the Three Marys; and the Parson himself, with a flag in his hand, represented Christ. Thereupon spake Eulenspiegel to the simple persons: "When the Angel asks you, Whom ye seek; ye must answer, The Parson's one-eyed Concubine." Now it came to pass that the time arrived when they were to act, and the Angel asked them: "Whom seek ye here?" and they answered, as Eulenspiegel had taught and bidden them, and said: "We seek the Parson's one-eyed Concubine." Whereby did the Parson observe that he was made a mock of. And when the Parson's Concubine heard the same, she started out of the Grave, and aimed a box at Eulenspiegel's face, but missed him, and hit one of the simple persons, who were representing the Three Marys. This latter then returned her a slap on the mouth, whereupon she caught him by the hair. But his Wife seeing this, came running thither, and fell upon

the Parson's Harlot. Which thing the Parson discerning, he threw down his flag, and sprang forward to his Harlot's assistance. Thus gave they one another hearty thwacking and basting, and there was great uproar in the Church. But when Eulenspiegel perceived that they all had one another by the ears in the Church, he went his ways, and came no more back.' [14]

These and the like pleasant narratives were the People's Comedy in those days. Neither was their Tragedy wanting; as indeed both spring up spontaneously in all regions of human Life; however, their chief work of this latter class, the wild, deep and now world-renowned *Legend of Faust*, belongs to a somewhat later date.[15]

Thus, though the Poetry which spoke in rhyme was feeble enough, the spirit of Poetry could nowise be regarded as extinct; while Fancy, Imagination and all the intellectual faculties necessary

[14] Flögel, iv. 290. For more of Eulenspiegel see Görres *Über die Volksbücher.*

[15] To the fifteenth century, say some who fix it on Johann Faust, the Goldsmith and partial Inventor of Printing: to the sixteenth century, say others, referring it to Johann Faust, Doctor in Philosophy; which individual did actually, as the Tradition also bears, study first at Wittenberg (where he might be one of Luther's pupils), then at Ingolstadt, where also he taught, and had a *Famulus* named Wagner, son of a clergyman at Wasserberg. Melancthon, Tritheim and other credible witnesses, some of whom had seen the man, vouch sufficiently for these facts. The rest of the Doctor's history is much more obscure. He seems to have been of a vehement, unquiet temper; skilled in Natural Philosophy, and perhaps in the occult science of Conjuring, by aid of which two gifts, a much shallower man, wandering in Need and Pride over the world in those days, might, without any Mephistopheles, have worked wonders enough. Nevertheless, that he rode off through the air on a wine-cask from Auerbach's Keller at Leipzig, in 1523, seems questionable; though an old carving, in that venerable Tavern, still mutely asserts it to the toper of this day. About 1560, his term of Thaumaturgy being over, he disappeared: whether, under feigned name, by the rope of some hangman; or 'frightfully 'torn in pieces by the Devil, near the village of Rimlich, between Twelve and 'One in the morning,' let each reader judge for himself. The latter was clearly George Rudolf Wiedemann's opinion, whose *Veritable History of the abominable Sins of Dr. Johann Faust* came out at Hamburg in 1599; and is no less circumstantially announced in the old People's-Book, *That everywhere-infamous Arch-Black-Artist and Conjuror, Dr. Faust's Compact with the Devil, wonderful Walk and Conversation, and terrible End*, printed, seemingly without date, at Köln (Cologne) and Nürnberg; read by every one; written by we know not whom. See again, for farther insight, Görres *Ueber die deutschen Volksbücher.* Another Work (Leipzig, 1824), expressly 'on Faust and the Wandering Jew,' which latter, in those times, wandered much in Germany, is also referred to. *Conver. Lexicon*, § *Faust.*

for that art, were in active exercise. Neither had the Enthusiasm of heart, on which it still more intimately depends, died out; but only taken another form. In lower degrees it expressed itself as an ardent zeal for Knowledge and Improvement; for spiritual excellence such as the time held out and prescribed. This was no languid, low-minded age; but of earnest busy effort, in all provinces of culture, resolutely struggling forward. Classical Literature, after long hindrances, had now found its way into Germany also: old Rome was open, with all its wealth, to the intelligent eye; scholars of Chrysoloras were fast unfolding the treasures of Greece. School Philosophy, which had never obtained firm footing among the Germans, was in all countries drawing to a close; but the subtle, piercing vision, which it had fostered and called into activity, was henceforth to employ itself with new profit on more substantial interests. In such manifold praiseworthy endeavours the most ardent mind had ample arena.

A higher, purer enthusiasm, again, which no longer found its place in chivalrous Minstrelsy, might still retire to meditate and worship in religious Cloisters, where, amid all the corruption of monkish manners, there were not wanting men who aimed at, and accomplished, the highest problem of manhood, a life of spiritual Truth. Among the Germans especially, that deep-feeling, deep-thinking, devout temper, now degenerating into abstruse theosophy, now purifying itself into holy eloquence and clear apostolic light, was awake in this era; a temper which had long dwelt, and still dwells there; which ere long was to render that people worthy the honour of giving Europe a new Reformation, a new Religion. As an example of monkish diligence and zeal, if of nothing more, we here mention the German Bible of Mathias von Behaim, which, in his Hermitage at Halle, he rendered from the Vulgate, in 1343; the Manuscript of which is still to be seen in Leipzig. Much more conspicuous stand two other German Priests of this Period; to whom, as connected with Literature also, a few words must now be devoted.

Johann Tauler is a name which fails in no Literary History of Germany: he was a man famous in his own day as the most eloquent of preachers; is still noted by critics for his intellectual deserts; by pious persons, especially of the class called Mystics, is still studied as a practical instructor; and by all true inquirers prized as a person of high talent and moral worth. Tauler was a Dominican Monk; seems to have lived and preached at Strasburg;

where, as his gravestone still testifies, he died in 1361. His devotional works have been often edited: one of his modern admirers has written his biography; wherein perhaps this is the strangest fact, if it be one, that once in the pulpit, 'he grew 'suddenly dumb, and did nothing but weep; in which despondent 'state he continued for two whole years.' Then, however, he again lifted up his voice, with new energy and new potency. We learn farther, that he 'renounced the dialect of Philosophy, and 'spoke direct to the heart in language of the heart.' His Sermons, composed in Latin and delivered in German, in which language, after repeated renovations and changes of dialect, they are still read, have, with his other writings, been characterised, by a native critic worthy of confidence, in these terms:

'They contain a treasure of meditations, hints, indications, full of heartfelt piety, which still speak to the inmost longings and noblest wants of man's mind. His style is abrupt, compressed, significant in its conciseness; the nameless depth of feelings struggles with the phraseology. He was the first that wrested from our German speech the fit expression for ideas of moral Reason and Emotion, and has left us riches in that kind, such as the zeal for purity and fulness of language in our own days cannot leave unheeded.'—Tauler, it is added, 'was a man who, imbued with genuine Devoutness, as it springs from the depths of a soul strengthened in self-contemplation, and, free and all-powerful, rules over Life and Effort,—attempted to train and win the people for a duty which had hitherto been considered as that of the learned class alone: to raise the Lay-world into moral study of Religion for themselves, that so, enfranchised from the bonds of unreflecting custom, they might regulate Creed and Conduct by strength self-acquired. He taught men to look within; by spiritual contemplation to feel the secret of their higher Destiny; to seek in their own souls what from without is never, or too scantily afforded; self-believing, to create what, by the dead letter of foreign Tradition, can never be brought forth.' [16]

Known to all Europe, as Tauler is to Germany, and of a class with him, as a man of antique Christian walk, of warm devoutly-feeling poetic spirit, and insight and experience in the deepest regions of man's heart and life, follows, in the next generation, Thomas Hamerken, or Hammerlein (*Malleolus*); usually named *Thomas à Kempis*, that is, *Thomas of Kempen*, a village near

[16] Wachler, *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der deutschen National-litteratur* (Lectures on the History of German National Literature), b. i. s. 131.

Cologne, where he was born in 1388. Others contend that Kampen in Overyssel was his birthplace; however, in either case at that era, more especially considering what he did, we can here regard him as a *Deutscher*, a German. For his spiritual and intellectual character we may refer to his works, written in the Latin tongue, and still known; above all, to his far-famed work *De Imitatione Christi*, which has been praised by such men as Luther, Leibnitz, Haller; and, what is more, has been read, and continues to be read, with moral profit, in all Christian languages and communions, having passed through upwards of a thousand editions, which number is yet daily increasing. A new English *Thomas à Kempis* was published only the other year. But the venerable man deserves a word from us, not only as a high, spotless Priest, and father of the Church, at a time when such were rare, but as a zealous promoter of learning, which, in his own country, he accomplished much to forward. Hammerlein, the son of poor parents, had been educated at the famous school of Deventer; he himself instituted a similar one at Zwoll, which long continued the grand classical seminary of the North. Among his own pupils we find enumerated Moritz von Spiegelberg, Rudolf von Lange, Rudolf Agricola, Antonius Liber, Ludwig Dringenberg, Alexander Hegius; of whom Agricola, with other two, by advice of their teacher, visited Italy to study Greek; the whole six, united through manhood and life, as they had been in youth and at school, are regarded as the founders of true classical literature among the Germans. Their scholastico-monastic establishments at Deventer, with Zwoll and its other numerous offspring, which rapidly extended themselves over the north-west of Europe from Artois to Silesia, and operated powerfully both in a moral and intellectual view, are among the characteristic redeeming features of that time; but the details of them fall not within our present limits.[17]

If now, quitting the Cloister and Library, we look abroad over active Life, and the general state of culture and spiritual endeavour as manifested there, we have on all hands the cheering prospect of a society in full progress. The Practical Spirit, which had pressed forward into Poetry itself, could not but be busy and successful in those provinces where its home specially lies. Among the Germans, it is true, so far as political condition was concerned, the aspect of affairs had not changed for the better. The Imperial Constitution was weakened and loosened into the mere semblance of a Govern-

[17] See Eichhorn's *Geschichte der Litteratur*, b. ii. s. 134.

ment; the head of which had still the title, but no longer the reality of sovereign power; so that Germany, ever since the times of Rudolf, had, as it were, ceased to be one great nation, and become a disunited, often conflicting aggregate of small nations. Nay, we may almost say, of petty districts, or even of households: for now, when every pitiful Baron claimed to be an independent potentate, and exercised his divine right of peace and war too often in plundering the industrious Burgher, public Law could no longer vindicate the weak against the strong: except the venerable unwritten code of *Faustrecht* (Club-Law), there was no other valid. On every steep rock, or difficult fastness, these dread sovereigns perched themselves; studding the country with innumerable *Raubschlösser* (Robber-Towers), which now in the eye of the picturesque tourist look interesting enough, but in those days were interesting on far other grounds. Herein dwelt a race of persons, proud, ignorant, hungry; who, boasting of an endless pedigree, talked familiarly of living on the produce of their 'Saddles' (*vom Sattel zu leben*), that is to say, by the profession of highwayman; for which unluckily, as just hinted, there was then no effectual gallows. Some, indeed, might plunder as the eagle, others as the vulture and crow; but, in general, from men cultivating that walk of life, no profit in any other was to be looked for. Vain was it, however, for the Kaiser to publish edict on edict against them; nay, if he destroyed their Robber-Towers, new ones were built; was the old wolf hunted down, the cub had escaped, who reappeared when his teeth were grown. Not till industry and social cultivation had everywhere spread, and risen supreme, could that brood, in detail, be extirpated or tamed.

Neither was this miserable defect of police the only misery in such a state of things. For the saddle-eating Baron, even in pacific circumstances, naturally looked down on the fruit-producing Burgher; who, again, feeling himself a wiser, wealthier, better and in time a stronger man, ill brooked this procedure, and retaliated, or, by quite declining such communications, avoided it. Thus, throughout long centuries, and after that old Code of Club-Law had been well-nigh abolished, the effort of the nation was still divided into two courses; the Noble and the Citizen would not work together, freely imparting and receiving their several gifts; but the culture of the polite arts, and that of the useful arts, had to proceed with mutual disadvantage, each on its separate footing. Indeed that supercilious and too marked distinction of ranks,

which so ridiculously characterised the Germans, has only in very recent times disappeared.

Nevertheless here, as it ever does, the strength of the country lay in the middle classes; which were sound and active, and, in spite of all these hindrances, daily advancing. The Free Towns, which, in Germany as elsewhere, the sovereign favoured, held within their walls a race of men as brave as they of the Robber-Towers, but exercising their bravery on fitter objects; who, by degrees, too, ventured into the field against even the greatest of these kinglets, and in many a stout fight taught them a juristic doctrine, which no head with all its helmets was too thick for taking in. The Four Forest Cantons had already testified in this way; their Tells and Stauffachers preaching, with apostolic blows and knocks, like so many Luthers; whereby, from their remote Alpine glens, all lands and all times have heard them, and believed them. By dint of such logic it began to be understood everywhere, that a Man, whether clothed in purple cloaks or in tanned sheepskins, wielding the sceptre or the oxgoad, is neither Deity nor Beast, but simply a Man, and must comport himself accordingly.

But Commerce of itself was pouring new strength into every peaceable community; the Hanse League, now in full vigour, secured the fruits of industry over all the North. The havens of the Netherlands, thronged with ships from every sea, transmitted or collected their wide-borne freight over Germany; where, far inland, flourished market-cities, with their cunning workmen, their spacious warehouses, and merchants who in opulence vied with the richest. Except, perhaps, in the close vicinity of Robber-Towers, and even there not always nor altogether, Diligence, good Order, peaceful Abundance were everywhere conspicuous in Germany. Petrarch has celebrated, in warm terms, the beauties of the Rhine, as he witnessed them; the rich, embellished, cultivated aspect of land and people: Æneas Sylvius, afterwards Pope Pius the Second, expresses himself, in the next century, with still greater emphasis: he says, and he could judge, having seen both, 'that the King of Scotland did not live so handsomely as a moderate Citizen of Nürnberg:' indeed Conrad Celtes, another contemporary witness, informs us, touching these same citizens, that their wives went abroad loaded with the richest jewels, that 'most of their household utensils were of silver and gold.' For, as Æneas Sylvius adds, 'their mercantile activity is astonishing; 'the greater part of the German nation consists of merchants.'

Thus too, in Augsburg, the Fugger family, which sprang, like that of the Medici, from smallest beginnings, were fast rising into that height of commercial greatness, such that Charles V., in viewing the Royal Treasury at Paris, could say, "I have a weaver in Augsburg able to buy it all with his own gold." [18] With less satisfaction the same haughty Monarch had to see his own Nephew wedded to the fair Philippine Welser, daughter of another merchant in that city, and for wisdom and beauty the paragon of her time.[19]

[18] Charles had his reasons for such a speech. This same Anton Fugger, to whom he alluded here, had often stood by him in straits; showing a munificence and even generosity worthy of the proudest princes. During the celebrated Diet of Augsburg, in 1530, the Emperor lodged for a whole year in Anton's house; and Anton was a man to warm his Emperor 'at a fire of cinnamon-wood,' and to burn therein 'the bonds for large sums owing him by his majesty.' For all which, Anton and his kindred had countships and princeships in abundance; also the right to coin money, but no solid bullion to exercise such right on; which, however, they repeatedly did on bullion of their own. This Anton left six millions of gold-crowns in cash; 'besides 'precious articles, jewels, properties in all countries of Europe, and both the 'Indies.' The Fuggers had ships on every sea, wagons on every highway; they worked the Corinthian Mines; even Albrecht Dürer's Pictures had to pass through their warehouses to the Italian market. However, this family had other merits than their mountains of metal, their kindness to needy Sovereigns, and even their all-embracing spirit of commercial enterprise. They were famed for acts of general beneficence, and did much charity where no imperial thanks were to be looked for. To found Hospitals and Schools, on the most liberal scale, was a common thing with them. In the sixteenth century, three benevolent brothers of the House purchased a suburb of Augsburg; rebuilt it with small commodious houses, to be let to indigent industrious burghers for a trifling rent: this is the well-known *Fuggerei*, which still existing, with its own walls and gate, maintains their name in daily currency there.—The founder of this remarkable family did actually drive the shuttle in the village of Göggingen, near Augsburg, about the middle of the Fourteenth Century; 'but in 1610,' says the *Spiegel der Ehren* (Mirror of Honour), 'the noble stem had so branched out, that there were forty-seven 'Counts and Countesses belonging to it, and of young descendants as many as 'there are days in the year.' Four stout boughs of this same noble stem, in the rank of Princes, still subsist and flourish. 'Thus in the generous Fuggers,' says that above-named *Mirror*, 'was fulfilled our Saviour's promise: Give, and it shall be given you.' *Conv. Lexicon*, § *Fugger-Geschlecht.*

[19] The Welsers were of patrician descent, and had for many centuries followed commerce at Augsburg, where, next only to the Fuggers, they played a high part. It was they, for example, that, at their own charges, first colonised Venezuela; that equipped the first German ship to India, 'the Journal of which still exists;' they united with the Fuggers to lend Charles V. twelve *Tonnen Gold*, 1,200,000 Florins. The fair Philippine, by her pure charms and honest wiles, worked out a reconciliation with Kaiser Ferdinand

In this state of economical prosperity, Literature and Art, such kinds of them at least as had a practical application, could not want encouragement. It is mentioned as one of the furtherances to Classical Learning among the Germans, that these Free Towns, as well as numerous petty Courts of Princes, exercising a sovereign power, required individuals of some culture to conduct their Diplomacy; one man able at least to write a handsome Latin style was an indispensable requisite. For a long while even this small accomplishment was not to be acquired in Germany; where, such had been the troublous condition of the Governments, there were yet, in the beginning of the fourteenth century, no Universities: however, a better temper and better fortune began at length to prevail among the German Sovereigns; the demands of the time insisted on fulfilment. The University of Prague was founded in 1348, that of Vienna in 1364,[20] and now, as if to make up for the delay, princes and communities on all hands made haste to establish similar Institutions; so that before the end of the century we find three others, Heidelberg, Cologne, Erfurt; in the course of the next, no fewer than eight more, of which Leipzig (in 1404) is the most remarkable. Neither did this honourable zeal grow cool in the sixteenth century, or even down to our own, when Germany, boasting of some forty great Schools and twenty-two Universities, four of which date within the last thirty years, may fairly reckon itself the best school-provided country in Europe; as, indeed, those who in any measure know it, are aware that it is also indisputably the best educated.

Still more decisive are the proofs of national activity, of progressive culture, among the Germans, if we glance at what concerns the practical Arts. Apart from Universities and learned show, there has always dwelt, in those same Nürnbergs and Augsburgs,

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the First, her Father-in-law; lived thirty happy years with her husband; and had medals struck by him, *Divæ Philippinæ*, in honour of her, when (at Inspruck in 1530) he became a widower. *Conv. Lexicon*, § *Welser*.

[20] There seems to be some controversy about the precedence here: Bouterwek gives Vienna, with a date 1333, as the earliest; Koch again puts Heidelberg, 1346, in front; the dates in the Text profess to be taken from Meiner's *Geschichte der Entstehung und Entwickelung der Hohen Schulen unsers Erdtheils* (History of the Origin and Development of High Schools in Europe), Göttingen, 1802. The last-established University is that of München (Munich), in 1826. Prussia alone has 21,000 Public Schoolmasters, specially trained to their profession, sometimes even sent to travel for improvement, at the cost of Government. What says 'the most enlightened nation in the world' to this?—Eats its pudding, and says little or nothing.

a solid, quietly-perseverant spirit, full of old Teutonic character and old Teutonic sense; whereby, ever and anon, from under the bonnet of some rugged German artisan or staid burgher, this and the other World-Invention has been starting-forth, where such was least of all looked for. Indeed, with regard to practical Knowledge in general, if we consider the present history and daily life of mankind, it must be owned that while each nation has contributed a share,—the largest share, at least of such shares as can be appropriated and fixed on any special contributor, belongs to Germany. Copernic, Hevel, Kepler, Otto Guericke, are of other times; but in this era also the spirit of Inquiry, of Invention, was especially busy. Gunpowder (of the thirteenth century), though Milton gives the credit of it to Satan, has helped mightily to lessen the horrors of War: thus much at least must be admitted in its favour, that it secures the dominion of civilised over savage man: nay hereby, in personal contests, not brute Strength, but Courage and Ingenuity can avail; for the Dwarf and the Giant are alike strong with pistols between them. Neither can Valour now find its best arena in War, in Battle, which is henceforth a matter of calculation and strategy, and the soldier a chess-pawn to shoot and be shot at; whereby that noble quality may at length come to reserve itself for other more legitimate occasions, of which, in this our Life-Battle with Destiny, there are enough. And thus Gunpowder, if it spread the havoc of War, mitigates it in a still higher degree; like some Inoculation,—to which may an extirpating Vaccination one day succeed! It ought to be stated, however, that the claim of Schwartz to the original invention is dubious; to the sole invention altogether unfounded: the recipe stands, under disguise, in the writings of Roger Bacon; the article itself was previously known in the East.

Far more indisputable are the advantages of Printing: and if the story of Brother Schwartz's mortar giving fire and driving his pestle through the ceiling, in the city of Mentz, as the painful Monk and Alchymist was accidentally pounding the ingredients of our first Gunpowder, is but a fable,—that of our first Book being printed there is much better ascertained. Johann Gutenberg was a native of Mentz; and there, in company with Faust and Schöffer, appears to have completed his invention between the years 1440 and 1449: the famous 'Forty-two line Bible' was printed there in 1455.[21] Of this noble art, which is like an infinitely intensated

[21] As to the Dutch claim, it rests only on vague local traditions, which were never heard of publicly till their Lorenz Coster had been dead almost a hundred and fifty years; so that, out of Holland, it finds few partisans.

organ of Speech, whereby the Voice of a small transitory man may reach not only through all earthly Space, but through all earthly Time, it were needless to repeat the often-repeated praises; or speculate on the practical effects, the most momentous of which are, perhaps, but now becoming visible. On this subject of the Press, and its German origin, a far humbler remark may be in place here: namely, that Rag-paper, the material on which Printing works and lives, was also invented in Germany some hundred and fifty years before. 'The oldest specimens of this article yet known 'to exist,' says Eichhorn, 'are some Documents, of the year 1318, 'in the Archives of the Hospital at Kaufbeuern. Breitkopf (*Vom 'Ursprung der Spielkarten*, On the Origin of Cards) has demon- 'strated our claim to the invention; and that France and England 'borrowed it from Germany, and Spain from Italy.'[22]

On the invention of Printing there followed naturally a multiplication of Books, and a new activity, which has ever since proceeded at an accelerating rate, in the business of Literature; but for the present, no change in its character or objects. Those Universities, and other Establishments and Improvements, were so many tools which the spirit of the time had devised, not for working-out new paths, which were their ulterior issue, but in the meanwhile for proceeding more commodiously on the old path. In the Prague University, it is true, whither Wickliffe's writings had found their way, a Teacher of more earnest tone had risen, in the person of John Huss, Rector there; whose Books, *Of the Six Errors* and *Of the Church*, still more his energetic, zealously polemical Discourses to the people, were yet unexampled on the Continent. The shameful murder of this man, who lived and died as beseemed a Martyr; and the stern vengeance which his countrymen took for it, unhappily not on the Constance Cardinals, but on less offensive Bohemian Catholics, kept-up during twenty years, on the Eastern Border of Germany, an agitating tumult, not only of opinion, but of action: however, the fierce, indomitable Zisca being called away, and the pusillanimous Emperor offering terms, which, indeed, he did not keep, this uproar subsided, and the national activity proceeded in its former course.

In German Literature, during those years, nothing presents itself as worthy of notice here. Chronicles were written; Class-books for the studious, edifying Homilies, in varied guise, for the busy, were

[22] B. ii. s. 91.—'The first German Paper-mill we have sure account of,' says Koch, 'worked at Nürnberg in 1390.' Vol. i. p. 35.

compiled: a few Books of Travels make their appearance, among which Translations from our too fabulous countryman, Mandeville, are perhaps the most remarkable. For the rest, Life continued to be looked at less with poetic admiration, than in a spirit of observation and comparison: not without many a protest against clerical and secular error; such, however, seldom rising into the style of grave hate and hostility, but playfully expressing themselves in satire. The old effort towards the Useful; in Literature, the old prevalence of the Didactic, especially of the Æsopic, is everywhere manifest. Of this Æsopic spirit, what phases it successively assumed, and its significance in these, there were much to be said. However, in place of multiplying smaller instances and aspects, let us now take up the highest; and with the best of all Apologues, *Reynard the Fox*, terminate our survey of that Fable-loving time.

The story of *Reinecke Fuchs*, or, to give it the original Low-German name, *Reineke de Fos*, is, more than any other, a truly European performance: for some centuries, a universal household possession and secular Bible, read everywhere, in the palace and the hut: it still interests us, moreover, by its intrinsic worth, being, on the whole, the most poetical and meritorious production of our Western World in that kind; or perhaps of the whole World, though, in such matters, the West has generally yielded to, and learned from, the East.

Touching the origin of this Book, as often happens in like cases, there is a controversy, perplexed not only by inevitable ignorance, but also by anger and false patriotism. Into this vexed sea we have happily no call to venture; and shall merely glance for a moment, from the firm land, where all that can specially concern us in the matter stands rescued and safe. The oldest printed Edition of our actual *Reynard* is that of Lübeck, in 1498; of which there is a copy, understood to be the only one, still extant in the Wolfenbüttel Library. This oldest Edition is in the Low-German or Saxon tongue, and appears to have been produced by Hinrek van Alkmer, who in the preface calls himself 'Schoolmaster and 'Tutor of that noble virtuous Prince and Lord, the Duke of 'Lorraine;' and says farther, that by order of this same worthy sovereign, he 'sought out and rendered the present Book from 'Walloon and French tongue into German, to the praise and honour 'of God, and wholesome edification of whoso readeth therein.' Which candid and business-like statement would doubtless have

continued to yield entire satisfaction; had it not been that, in modern days, and while this first Lübeck Edition was still lying in its dusty recess unknown to Bibliomaniacs, another account, dated some hundred years later, and supported by a little subsequent hearsay, had been raked up: how the real Author was Nicholas Baumann, Professor at Rostock; how he had been Secretary to the Duke of Juliers, but was driven from his service by wicked cabals; and so in revenge composed this satirical adumbration of the Juliers Court; putting on the title-page, to avoid consequences, the feigned tale of its being rendered from the French and Walloon tongue, and the feigned name of Hinrek van Alkmer, who, for the rest, was never Schoolmaster and Tutor at Lorraine, or anywhere else, but a mere man of straw, created for the nonce out of so many Letters of the Alphabet. Hereupon excessive debate, and a learned sharp-shooting, with victory shouts on both sides; into which we nowise enter. Some touch of human sympathy does draw us towards Hinrek, whom, if he was once a real man, with bones and sinews, stomach and provender-scrip, it is mournful to see evaporated away into mere vowels and consonants: however, beyond a kind wish, we can give him no help. In Literary History, except on this one occasion, as seems indisputable enough, he is nowhere mentioned or hinted at.

Leaving Hinrek and Nicolaus, then, to fight-out their quarrel as they may, we remark that the clearest issue of it would throw little light on the origin of *Reinecke*. The victor could at most claim to be the first German redactor of this Fable, and the happiest; whose work had superseded and obliterated all preceding ones whatsoever; but nowise to be the inventor thereof, who must be sought for in a much remoter period. There are even two printed versions of the Tale, prior in date to this of Lübeck: a Dutch one, at Delft, in 1484; and one by Caxton in English, in 1481, which seems to be the earliest of all.[23] These two differ essentially from

[23] Caxton's Edition, a copy of which is in the British Museum, bears title: *Hystorye of Reynart the Foxe;* and begins thus: 'It was aboute the tyme of 'Pentecoste or Whytsontyde that the wodes comynly be lusty and gladsome, 'and the trees clad with levys and blossoms, and the grounds with herbes and 'flowers sweete smellyng;'—where, as in many other passages, the fact that Caxton and Alkmer had the same original before them is manifest enough. Our venerable Printer says in conclusion: 'I have not added ne mynnsshed 'but have followed as nyghe as I can my copye whych was in dutche; and by 'me Willm Caxton translated in to this rude and symple englyssh in thabbey 'of Westminster, and fynnyshed the vi daye of Juyn the yere of our lord 1481, 'the 21 yere of the regne of Kynge Edward the iiijth.'

Hinrek's; still more so does the French *Roman du nouveau Renard*, composed 'by Jacquemars Gielée at Lisle, about the year 1290,' which yet exists in manuscript: however, they sufficiently verify that statement, by some supposed to be feigned, of the German redactor's having 'sought and rendered' his work from the Walloon and French; in which latter tongue, as we shall soon see, some shadow of it had been known and popular, long centuries before that time. For besides Gielée's work, we have a *Renard Couronné* of still earlier, a *Renard Contrefait* of somewhat later date: and Chroniclers inform us that, at the noted Festival given by Philip the Fair, in the beginning of the fourteenth century, among the dramatic entertainments, was a whole Life of Reynard; wherein it must not surprise us that he 'ended by becoming Pope, and still, 'under the Tiara, continued to eat poultry.' Nay, curious inquirers have discovered, on the French and German borders, some vestige of the Story even in Carlovingian times; which, indeed, again makes it a German original: they will have it that a certain Reinhard, or Reinecke, Duke of Lorraine, who, in the ninth century, by his craft and exhaustless stratagems, worked strange mischief in that region, many times overreaching King Zwentibald himself, and at last, in his stronghold of Durfos, proving impregnable to him,—had in satirical songs of that period been celebrated as a *fox*, as *Reinhard the Fox*, and so given rise afar off to this Apologue, at least to the title of it. The name *Isegrim*, as applied to the Wolf, these same speculators deduce from an Austrian Count Isengrin, who, in those old days, had revolted against Kaiser Arnulph, and otherwise exhibited too wolfish a disposition. Certain it is, at least, that both designations were in universal use during the twelfth century; they occur, for example, in one of the two *sirventes* which our Cœur-de-Lion has left us: 'Ye have promised 'me fidelity,' says he, 'but ye have kept it as the Wolf did to the 'Fox,' as *Isangrin* did to *Reinhart*.[24] Nay, perhaps the ancient circulation of some such Song, or Tale, among the French, is best of all evinced by the fact that this same *Reinhart*, or *Renard*, is still the only word in their language for *Fox;* and thus, strangely enough, the Proper may have become an Appellative; and sly Duke Reinhart, at an era when the French tongue was first evolving itself from the rubbish of Latin and German, have insinuated his name into Natural as well as Political History.

[24] Flögel (iii. 31), who quotes the *Histoire Littéraire des Troubadours*, t. i. p. 63.

From all which, so much at least would appear: That the Fable of *Reynard the Fox*, which in the German version we behold completed, nowise derived its completeness from the individual there named Hinrek van Alkmer, or from any other individual or people; but rather, that being in old times universally current, it was taken up by poets and satirists of all countries; from each received some accession or improvement; and properly has no single author. We must observe, however, that as yet it had attained no fixation or consistency; no version was decidedly preferred to every other. Caxton's and the Dutch appear, at best, but as the skeleton of what afterwards became a body; of the old Walloon version, said to have been discovered lately, we are taught to entertain a similar opinion:[25] in the existing French versions, which are all older, either in Gielée's, or in the others, there is even less analogy. Loosely conjoined, therefore, and only in the state of dry bones, was it that Hinrek, or Nicolaus, or some Lower-Saxon whoever he might be, found the story; and blowing on it with the breath of genius, raised it up into a consistent Fable. Many additions and some exclusions he must have made; was probably enough assisted by personal experience of a Court, whether that of Juliers or some other; perhaps also he admitted personal allusions, and doubtless many an oblique glance at existing things: and thus was produced the Low-German *Reinecke de Fos;* which version, shortly after its appearance, had extinguished all the rest, and come to be, what it still is, the sole veritable representative of *Reynard,* inasmuch as all subsequent translations and editions have derived themselves from it.

The farther history of *Reinecke* is easily traced. In this new guise, it spread abroad over all the world, with a scarcely exampled rapidity; fixing itself also as a firm possession in most countries, where, indeed, in this character, we still find it. It was printed and rendered, innumerable times: in the original dialect alone, the last Editor has reckoned up more than twenty Editions; on one of which, for example, we find such a name as that of Heinrich Voss. It was first translated into High-German in 1545; into Latin in 1567, by Hartmann Schopper, whose smooth style and rough fortune keep him in memory with Scholars:[26] a new version into

[25] See Scheller: *Reineke de Fos, To Brunswyk,* 1825; Vorrede.

[26] While engaged in this Translation, at Freiburg in Baden, he was impressed as a soldier, and carried, apparently in fetters, to Vienna, having given his work to another to finish. At Vienna he stood not long in the ranks; having fallen violently sick, and being thrown out in the streets to recover

short German verse appeared next century; in our own times, Goethe has not disdained to reproduce it, by means of his own, in a third shape: of Soltau's version, into literal doggerel, we have already testified. Long generations before, it had been manufactured into Prose, for the use of the people, and was sold on stalls; where still, with the needful changes in spelling, and printed on grayest paper, it tempts the speculative eye.

Thus has our old Fable, rising like some River in the remote distance, from obscure rivulets, gathered strength out of every valley, out of every country, as it rolled on. It is European in two senses; for as all Europe contributed to it, so all Europe has enjoyed it. Among the Germans, *Reinecke Fuchs* was long a House-book and universal Best-companion: it has been lectured on in Universities, quoted in Imperial council-halls; it lay on the toilette of Princesses; and was thumbed to pieces on the bench of the Artisan; we hear of grave men ranking it only next to the Bible. Neither, as we said, was its popularity confined to home; Translations ere long appeared in French, Italian, Danish, Swedish, Dutch, English:[27] nor was that same stall-honour, which has been

there. He says, 'he was without bed, and had to seek quarters on the muddy pavement, in a Barrel.' Here too, in the night, some excessively straitened individual stole from him his cloak and sabre. However, men were not all hyænas: one Josias Hufnagel, unknown to him, but to whom by his writings he was known, took him under his roof, procured medical assistance, equipped him anew; so that 'in the harvest-season, being half-cured, he could return, 'or rather re-crawl to Frankfort-on-the-Mayn.' There too 'a Magister Johann 'Cuipius, Christian Egenolph's son-in-law, kindly received him,' and encouraged him to finish his Translation; as accordingly he did, dedicating it to the Emperor, with doleful complaints, fruitless or not is unknown. For now poor Hartmann, no longer an Autobiographer, quite vanishes, and we can understand only that he laid his wearied back one day in a most still bed, where the blanket of the Night softly enwrapped him and all his woes.——His book is entitled *Opus poeticum de admirabili Fallaciâ et Astutiâ Vulpeculæ Reinekes*, &c. &c.; and in the Dedication and Preface contains all these details.

[27] Besides Caxton's original, of which little is known among us but the name, we have two versions; one in 1667, 'with excellent Morals and Expositions,' which was reprinted in 1681, and followed in 1684 by a Continuation, called the *Shifts of Reynardine the Son of Reynard*, of English growth; another in 1708, slightly altered from the former, explaining what appears doubtful or allegorical; 'it being originally written,' says the brave Editor elsewhere, 'by an eminent Statesman of the German Empire, to show some 'Men their Follies, and correct the Vices of the Times he lived in.' Not only *Reynardine*, but a second Appendix, *Cawood the Rook*, appears here; also there are 'curious Devices, or Pictures.'—Of Editions 'printed for the Flying-Stationers' we say nothing.

reckoned the truest literary celebrity, refused it here; perhaps many a reader of these pages may, like the writer of them, recollect the hours, when, hidden from unfeeling gaze of pedagogue, he swallowed *The most pleasant and delightful History of Reynard the Fox*, like stolen waters, with a timorous joy.

So much for the outward fortunes of this remarkable Book. It comes before us with a character such as can belong only to a very few; that of being a true World's-Book, which through centuries was everywhere at home, the spirit of which diffused itself into all languages and all minds. These quaint Æsopic figures have painted themselves in innumerable heads; that rough, deep-lying humour has been the laughter of many generations. So that, at worst, we must regard this *Reinecke* as an ancient Idol, once worshipped, and still interesting for that circumstance, were the sculpture never so rude. We can love it, moreover, as being indigenous, wholly of our own creation: it sprang up from European sense and character, and was a faithful type and organ of these.

But independently of all extrinsic considerations, this Fable of *Reinecke* may challenge a judgment on its own merits. Cunningly constructed, and not without a true poetic life, we must admit it to be: great power of conception and invention, great pictorial fidelity, a warm, sunny tone of colouring, are manifest enough. It is full of broad rustic mirth; inexhaustible in comic devices; a World-Saturnalia, where Wolves tonsured into Monks, and nigh starved by short commons, Foxes pilgriming to Rome for absolution, Cocks pleading at the judgment-bar, make strange mummery. Nor is this wild Parody of Human Life without its meaning and moral: it is an air-pageant from Fancy's dream-grotto, yet wisdom lurks in it; as we gaze, the vision becomes poetic and prophetic. A true Irony must have dwelt in the Poet's heart and head; here, under grotesque shadows, he gives us the saddest picture of Reality; yet for us without sadness; his figures mask themselves in uncouth bestial vizards, and enact, gambolling; their Tragedy dissolves into sardonic grins. He has a deep, heartfelt Humour, sporting with the world and its evils in kind mockery: this is the poetic *soul*, round which the outward *material* has fashioned itself into living coherence. And so, in that rude old Apologue, we have still a mirror, though now tarnished and timeworn, of true magic reality; and can discern there, in cunning reflex, some image both of our destiny and of our duty: for now, as then, Prudence

is the only virtue sure of its reward, and Cunning triumphs where Honesty is worsted; and now, as then, it is the wise man's part to know this, and cheerfully look for it, and cheerfully defy it:

Ut vulpis adulatio
Here through his own world moveth,
Sic hominis et ratio
Most like to Reynard's proveth.
Ut vulpis adulatio
Nu in de werlde blikket:
Sic hominis et ratio
Gelyk dem Fos sik shikket.
Motto to *Reineke.*

If *Reinecke* is nowise a perfect Comic Epos, it has various features of such, and above all, a genuine Epic spirit, which is the rarest feature.

Of the Fable, and its incidents and structure, it is perhaps superfluous to offer any sketch; to most readers the whole may be already familiar. How Noble, King of the Beasts, holding a solemn Court one Whitsuntide, is deafened on all hands with complaints against Reinecke; Hinze the Cat, Lampe the Hare, Isegrim the Wolf, with innumerable others, having suffered from his villany, Isegrim especially, in a point which most keenly touches honour; nay, Chanticleer the Cock (*Henning de Hane*), amid bitterest wail, appearing even with the *corpus delicti*, the body of one of his children, whom that arch-knave has feloniously murdered with intent to eat. How his indignant Majesty thereupon despatches Bruin the Bear to cite the delinquent in the King's name; how Bruin, inveigled into a Honey-expedition, returns without his errand, without his ears, almost without his life; Hinze the Cat, in a subsequent expedition, faring no better. How at last Reinecke, that he may not have to stand actual siege in his fortress of Malapertus, does appear for trial, and is about to be hanged, but on the gallows-ladder makes a speech unrivalled in forensic eloquence, and saves his life; nay, having incidentally hinted at some Treasures, the hiding-place of which is well known to him, rises into high favour; is permitted to depart on that pious pilgrimage to Rome he has so much at heart, and furnished even with shoes cut from the living hides of Isegrim and Isegrim's much-injured Spouse, his worst enemies. How, the Treasures not making their appearance, but only new misdeeds, he is again haled

to judgment; again glozes the general ear with sweetest speeches; at length, being challenged to it, fights Isegrim in knightly tourney, and by the cunningest though the most unchivalrous method, not to be farther specified in polite writing, carries off a complete victory; and having thus, by wager of battle, manifested his innocence, is overloaded with royal favour, created Chancellor, and Pilot to weather the Storm; and so, in universal honour and authority, reaps the fair fruit of his gifts and labours:

Whereby shall each to wisdom turn,
Evil eschew and virtue learn,
Therefore was this same story wrote,
That is its aim, and other not.
This Book for little price is sold,
But image clear of world doth hold;
Whoso into the world would look,
My counsel is,—he buy this book.
So endeth Reynard Fox's story:
God help us all to heavenly glory!

It has been objected that the Animals in *Reinecke* are not Animals, but men disguised; to which objection, except in so far as grounded on the necessary indubitable fact that this is an Apologue or emblematic Fable, and no Chapter of Natural History, we cannot in any considerable degree accede. Nay, that very contrast between Object and Effort, where the Passions of men develop themselves on the Interests of animals, and the whole is huddled together in chaotic mockery, is a main charm of the picture. For the rest, we should rather say, these bestial characters were moderately well sustained: the vehement, futile vociferation of Chanticleer; the hysterical promptitude, and earnest profession and protestation of poor Lampe the Hare; the thick-headed ferocity of Isegrim; the sluggish, gluttonous opacity of Bruin; above all, the craft, the tact and inexhaustible knavish adroitness of Reinecke himself, are in strict accuracy of costume. Often also their situations and occupations are bestial enough. What quantities of bacon and other proviant do Isegrim and Reinecke forage; Reinecke contributing the scheme,—for the two were then in partnership,—and Isegrim paying the shot in broken bones! What more characteristic than the fate of Bruin, when ill-counselled, he introduces his stupid head into Rustefill's half-split log; has the wedges whisked away, and stands clutched there, as in a vice, and uselessly roaring; disappointed of honey, sure only of a beating

without parallel! Not to forget the Mare, whom, addressing her by the title of Goodwife, with all politeness, Isegrim, sore-pinched with hunger, asks whether she will sell her foal: she answers, that the price is written on her hinder hoof; which document the intending purchaser, being 'an Erfurt graduate,' declares his full ability to read; but finds there no writing, or print,—save only the *print* of six horsenails on his own mauled visage. And abundance of the like; sufficient to excuse our old Epos on this head, or altogether justify it. Another objection, that, namely, which points to the great and excessive coarseness of the work here and there, it cannot so readily turn aside; being indeed rude, old-fashioned, and home-spun, apt even to draggle in the mire: neither are its occasional dulness and tediousness to be denied; but only to be set against its frequent terseness and strength, and pardoned as the product of poor humanity, from whose hands nothing, not even a *Reineke de Fos*, comes perfect.

He who would read, and still understand this old Apologue, must apply to Goethe, whose version, for poetical use, we have found infinitely the best; like some copy of an ancient, bedimmed, half-obliterated woodcut, but new-done on steel, on India-paper, with all manner of graceful yet appropriate appendages. Nevertheless, the old Low-German original has also a certain charm, and simply as the original, would claim some notice. It is reckoned greatly the best performance that was ever brought out in that dialect; interesting, moreover, in a philological point of view, especially to us English; being properly the language of our old Saxon Fatherland; and still curiously like our own, though the two, for some twelve centuries, have had no brotherly communication. One short specimen, with the most verbal translation, we shall insert here, and then have done with *Reinecke:*

De Greving was Reinken broder's söne,
The Badger was Reinke's brother's son,
De sprak do, un was sêr köne.
He spoke there, and was (sore) very (keen) bold.
He forantworde in dem Hove den Fos,
He (for-answered) defended in the Court the Fox,
De dog was sêr falsh un lôs.
That (though) yet was very false and loose.
He sprak to deme Wulve also fôrd:
He spoke to the Wolf so forth:
Here Isegrim, it is ein ôldspräken wôrd,

Master Isegrim, it is an old-spoken word,
Des fyendes mund shaffet selden frôm!
The (fiend's) enemy's mouth (shapeth) bringeth seldom advantage!
So do ji ôk by Reinken, minem ôm.
So do ye (eke) too by Reinke, mine (eme) uncle.
Were he so wol alse ji hyr to Hove,
Were he as well as ye here at Court,
Un stunde he also in des Koninge's love,
And stood he so in the King's favour,
Here Isegrim, alse ji dôt,
Master Isegrim, as ye do,
It sholde ju nigt dünken gôd,
It should you not (think) seem good,
Dat ji en hyr alsus forspräken
That ye him here so forspake
Un de ôlden stükke hyr fôrräken.
And the old tricks here forth-raked.
Men dat kwerde, dat ji Reinken hävven gedân,
But the ill that ye Reinke have done,
Dat late ji al agter stan.
That let ye all (after stand) stand by.
It is nog etliken heren wol kund,
It is yet to some gentlemen well known,
Wo ji mid Reinken maken den ferbund,
How ye with Reinke made (bond) alliance,
Un wolden wären twe like gesellen:
And would be two (like) equal partners:
Dat mok ik dirren heren fortällen.
That mote I these gentlemen forth-tell.
Wente Reinke, myn ôm in wintersnôd,
Since Reinke, mine uncle, in winter's need,
Umme Isegrim's willen, fylna was dôd.
For Isegrim's (will) sake, full-nigh was dead.
Wente it geshag dat ein kwam gefaren,
For it chanced that one came (faring) driving,
De hadde grote fishe up ener karen:
Who had many fishes upon a car:
Isegrim hadde geren der fishe gehaled,
Isegrim had fain the fishes have (haled) got,
Men he hadde nigt, darmid se wörden betaled.
But he had not wherewith they should be (betold) paid.
He bragte minen ôm in de grote nôd,
He brought mine uncle into great (need) straits,

Um sinen willen ging he liggen for dôd,
For his sake went he to (lig) lie for dead,
Regt in den wäg, un stund äventur.
Right in the way, and stood (adventure) chance.
Market, worden em ôk de fishe sûr?
Mark, were him eke the fishes (sour) dear-bought?
Do jenne mid der kare gefaren kwam
When (yond) he with the car driving came
Un minen ôm darsülvest fornem,
And mine uncle (there-self) even there perceived,
Hastigen tôg he syn swërd un snel,
Hastily (took) drew he his sword and (snell) quick,
Un wolde mineme ome torrükken en fel.
And would my uncle (tatter in fell) tear in pieces.
Men he rögede sik nigt klên nog grôt;
But he stirred himself not (little nor great) more or less;
Do mênde he dat he were dôd;
Then (meaned) thought he that he was dead;
He läde ön up de kar, und dayte en to fillen,
He laid him upon the car, and thought him to skin,
Dat wagede he all dorg Isegrim's willen!
That risked he all through Isegrim's will!
Do he fordan begunde to faren,
When he forth-on began to fare,
Wärp Reinke etlike fishe fan der karen,
Cast Reinke some fishes from the car,
Isegrim fan ferne agteona kwam
Isegrim from far after came
Un derre fishe al to sik nam.
And these fishes all to himself took.
Reinke sprang wedder fan der karen;
Reinke sprang again from the car;
Em lüstede to nigt länger to faren.
Him listed not longer to fare.
He hadde ôk gêrne der fishe begërd,
He (had) would have also fain of the fishes required,
Men Isegrim hadde se alle fortêrd.
But Isegrim had them all consumed.
He hadde geten dat he wolde barsten,
He had eaten so that he would burst,
Un moste darumme gên torn arsten.
And must thereby go to the doctor.
Do Isegrim der graden nigt en mogte,

As Isegrim the fish-bones not liked,
Der sülven he em ein weinig brogte.
Of these (self) same he him a little brought.

Whereby it would appear, if we are to believe Grimbart the Badger, that Reinecke was not only the cheater in this case, but also the cheatee: however, he makes matters straight again in that other noted fish-expedition, where Isegrim, minded not to steal but to catch fish, and having no fishing-tackle, by Reinecke's advice inserts his tail into the lake, in winter-season; but before the promised string of trouts, all hooked to one another and to him, will bite,—is frozen in, and left there to his own bitter meditations.

We here take leave of *Reineke de Fos*, and of the whole Æsopic genus, of which it is almost the last, and by far the most remarkable example. The Age of Apologue, like that of Chivalry and Love-singing, is gone; for nothing in this Earth has continuance. If we ask, Where are now our People's-Books? the answer might give room for reflections. Hinrek van Alkmer has passed away, and Dr. Birkbeck has risen in his room. What good and evil lie in that little sentence!—But doubtless the day is coming when what is wanting here will be supplied; when as the Logical, so likewise the Poetical susceptibility and faculty of the people,—their Fancy, Humour, Imagination, wherein lie the main elements of spiritual life,—will no longer be left uncultivated, barren, or bearing only spontaneous thistles, but in new and finer harmony with an improved Understanding, will flourish in new vigour; and in our inward world there will again be a sunny Firmament and verdant Earth, as well as a Pantry and culinary Fire; and men will learn not only to recapitulate and compute, but to worship, to love; in tears or in laughter, hold mystical as well as logical communion with the high and the low of this wondrous Universe; and read, as they should live, with their whole being. Of which glorious consummation there is at all times, seeing these endowments are indestructible, nay essentially supreme in man, the firmest ulterior certainty, but, for the present, only faint prospects and far-off indications. Time brings Roses!

HISTORIC SURVEY OF GERMAN POETRY.

HISTORIC SURVEY OF GERMAN POETRY.[1]

[1831.]

GERMAN Literature has now for upwards of half a century been making some way in England; yet by no means at a constant rate, rather in capricious flux and reflux,—deluge alternating with desiccation: never would it assume such moderate, reasonable currency, as promised to be useful and lasting. The history of its progress here would illustrate the progress of more important things; would again exemplify what obstacles a new spiritual object, with its mixture of truth and of falsehood, has to encounter from unwise enemies, still more from unwise friends; how dross is mistaken for metal, and common ashes are solemnly labelled as fell poison; how long, in such cases, blind Passion must vociferate before she can awaken Judgment; in short, with what tumult, vicissitude and protracted difficulty, a foreign doctrine adjusts and locates itself among the home-born. Perfect ignorance is quiet, perfect knowledge is quiet; not so the transition from the former to the latter. In a vague, all-exaggerating twilight of wonder, the new has to fight its battle with the old; Hope has to settle accounts with Fear: thus the scales strangely waver; public opinion, which is as yet baseless, fluctuates without limit; periods of foolish admiration and foolish execration must elapse, before that of true inquiry and zeal according to knowledge can begin.

Thirty years ago, for example, a person of influence and understanding thought good to emit such a proclamation as the following: 'Those ladies, who take the lead in society, are loudly called 'upon to act as guardians of the public taste as well as of the

[1] EDINBURGH REVIEW, No. 105.—*Historic Survey of German Poetry, interspersed with various Translations.* By W. Taylor, of Norwich. 3 vols. 8vo. London, 1830.

'public virtue. They are called upon, therefore, to oppose, with 'the whole weight of their influence, the irruption of those swarms 'of Publications now daily issuing from the banks of the Danube, 'which, like their ravaging predecessors of the darker ages, though 'with far other and more fatal arms, are overrunning civilised 'society. Those readers, whose purer taste has been formed on 'the correct models of the old classic school, see with indignation 'and astonishment the Huns and Vandals once more overpowering 'the Greeks and Romans. They behold our minds, with a retro-'grade but rapid motion, hurried back to the reign of Chaos and 'old Night, by distorted and unprincipled Compositions, which, in 'spite of strong flashes of genius, unite the taste of the Goths 'with the morals of Bagshot.'—'The newspapers announce that 'Schiller's *Tragedy of the Robbers*, which inflamed the young 'nobility of Germany to enlist themselves into a band of highway-'men to rob in the forests of Bohemia, is now acting in England 'by persons of quality!'[2]

Whether our fair Amazons, at sound of this alarm-trumpet, drew up in array of war to discomfit these invading Compositions, and snuff-out the lights of that questionable private theatre, we have not learned; and see only that, if so, their campaign was fruitless and needless. Like the old Northern Immigrators, those new Paper Goths marched on resistless whither they were bound; some to honour, some to dishonour, the most to oblivion and the impalpable inane; and no weapon or artillery, not even the glances of bright eyes, but only the omnipotence of Time, could tame and assort them. Thus, Kotzebue's truculent armaments, once so threatening, all turned out to be mere Fantasms and Night-apparitions; and so rushed onwards, like some Spectre-Hunt, with loud howls indeed, yet hurrying nothing into Chaos but themselves. While, again, Schiller's *Tragedy of the Robbers*, which did not inflame either the young or the old nobility of Germany to rob in the forests of Bohemia, or indeed to do anything, except perhaps yawn a little less, proved equally innocuous in England, and might still be acted without offence, could living individuals, idle enough for that end, be met with here. Nay, this same Schiller, not indeed by *Robbers*, yet by *Wallensteins*, by *Maids of Orleans*, and *Wilhelm Tells*, has actually conquered for himself a fixed dominion among us, which is yearly widening; round whick

[2] *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education.* By Hannah More. The Eighth Edition, p. 41.

other German kings, of less intrinsic prowess, and of greater, are likewise erecting thrones. And yet, as we perceive, civilised society still stands in its place; and the public taste, as well as the public virtue, live on, though languidly, as before. For, in fine, it has become manifest that the old Cimmerian Forest is now quite felled and tilled; that the true Children of Night, whom we have to dread, dwell not on the banks of the Danube, but nearer hand.

Could we take our progress in knowledge of German Literature since that diatribe was written, as any measure of our progress in the science of Criticism, above all, in the grand science of national Tolerance, there were some reason for satisfaction. With regard to Germany itself, whether we yet stand on the right footing, and know at last how we are to live in profitable neighbourhood and intercourse with that country; or whether the present is but one other of those capricious tides, which also will have its reflux, may seem doubtful: meanwhile, clearly enough, a rapidly growing favour for German Literature comes to light; which favour too is the more hopeful as it now grounds itself on better knowledge, on direct study and judgment. Our knowledge is better, if only because more general. Within the last ten years, independent readers of German have multiplied perhaps a hundredfold; so that now this acquirement is almost expected as a natural item in liberal education. Hence, in a great number of minds, some immediate personal insight into the deeper significance of German Intellect and Art;—everywhere, at least a feeling that it has some such significance. With independent readers, moreover, the writer ceases to be independent, which of itself is a considerable step. Our British Translators, for instance, have long been unparalleled in modern literature, and, like their country, 'the envy of surrounding nations:' but now there are symptoms that, even in the remote German province, they must no longer range quite at will; that the butchering of a *Faust* will henceforth be accounted literary homicide, and practitioners of that quality must operate on the dead subject only. While there are Klingemanns and Claurens in such abundance, let no merely ambitious, or merely hungry Interpreter fasten on Goethes and Schillers.

Remark too, with satisfaction, how the old-established British Critic now feels that it has become unsafe to speak delirium on this subject; wherefore he prudently restricts himself to one of two courses: either to acquire some understanding of it, or, which

is the still surer course, altogether to hold his peace. Hence freedom from much babble that was wont to be oppressive: probably no watchhorn with such a note as that of Mrs. More's can again be sounded, by male or female Dogberry, in these Islands. Again, there is no one of our younger, more vigorous Periodicals, but has its German craftsman, gleaning what he can: we have seen Jean Paul quoted in English Newspapers. Nor, among the signs of improvement, at least of extended curiosity, let us omit our British Foreign Reviews, a sort of merchantmen that regularly visit the Continental, especially the German Ports, and bring back such ware as luck yields them, with the hope of better. Last, not least among our evidences of Philo-Germanism, here is a whole *Historic Survey of German Poetry*, in three sufficient octavos; and this not merely in the eulogistic and recommendatory vein, but proceeding in the way of criticism, and indifferent, impartial narrative: a man of known character, of talent, experience, penetration, judges that the English public is prepared for such a service, and likely to reward it.

These are appearances, which, as advocates for the friendly approximation of all men and all peoples, and the readiest possible interchange of whatever each produces of advantage to the others, we must witness gladly. Free literary intercourse with other nations, what is it but an extended Freedom of the Press; a liberty to read (in spite of Ignorance, of Prejudice, which is the worst of Censors) what our foreign teachers also have printed for us? Ultimately, therefore, a liberty to speak and to hear, were it with men of all countries and of all times; to use, in utmost compass, those precious natural organs, by which not Knowledge only but mutual Affection is chiefly generated among mankind! It is a natural wish in man to know his fellow-passengers in this strange Ship, or Planet, on this strange Life-voyage: neither need his curiosity restrict itself to the cabin where he himself chances to lodge; but may extend to all accessible departments of the vessel. In all he will find mysterious beings, of Wants and Endeavours like his own; in all he will find Men; with these let him comfort and manifoldly instruct himself. As to German Literature, in particular, which professes to be not only new, but original, and rich in curious information for us; which claims, moreover, nothing that we have not granted to the French, Italian, Spanish, and in a less degree to far meaner literatures, we are gratified to see that such claims can no longer be resisted.

In the present fallow state of our English Literature, when no Poet cultivates his own poetic field, but all are harnessed into Editorial teams, and ploughing in concert, for Useful Knowledge, or Bibliopolic Profit, we regard this renewal of our intercourse with poetic Germany, after twenty years of languor or suspension, as among the most remarkable and even promising features of our recent intellectual history. In the absence of better tendencies, let this, which is no idle, but in some points of view a deep and earnest one, be encouraged. For ourselves, in the midst of so many louder and more exciting interests, we feel it a kind of duty to cast some glances now and then on this little stiller interest: since the matter is once for all to be inquired into, sound notions on it should be furthered, unsound ones cannot be too speedily corrected. It is on such grounds that we have taken up this *Historic Survey.*

Mr. Taylor is so considerable a person, that no Book deliberately published by him, on any subject, can be without weight. On German Poetry, such is the actual state of public information and curiosity, his guidance will be sure to lead or mislead a numerous class of inquirers. We are therefore called on to examine him with more than usual strictness and minuteness. The Press, in these times, has become so active; Literature, what is still called Literature, has so dilated in volume, and diminished in density, that the very Reviewer feels at a nonplus, and has ceased to review. Why thoughtfully examine what was written without thought; or note faults and merits, where there is neither fault nor merit? From a Nonentity, embodied, with innocent deception, in foolscap and printer's ink, and named Book; from the common wind of Talk, even when it is conserved by such mechanism, for days, in the shape of Froth,—how shall the hapless Reviewer filter aught in that once so profitable colander of his? He has ceased, as we said, to attempt the impossible,—cannot review, but only discourse; he dismisses his too unproductive Author, generally with civil words, not to quarrel needlessly with a fellow-creature; and must try, as he best may, to grind from his own poor garner. Authors long looked with an evil, envious eye on the Reviewer, and strove often to blow-out his light, which only burnt the clearer for such blasts; but now, cunningly altering their tactics, they have extinguished it by want of oil. Unless for some unforeseen change of affairs, or some new-contrived

machinery, of which there is yet no trace, the trade of the Reviewer is well-nigh done.

The happier are we that Mr. Taylor's Book is of the old stamp, and has substance in it for our uses. If no honour, there will be no disgrace, in having carefully examined it; which service, indeed, is due to our readers, not without curiosity in this matter, as well as to the Author. In so far as he seems a safe guide, and brings true tidings from the promised land, let us proclaim that fact, and recommend him to all pilgrims: if, on the other hand, his tidings are false, let us hasten to make this also known; that the German Canaan suffer not, in the eyes of the fainthearted, by spurious samples of its produce and reports of bloodthirsty sons of Anak dwelling there, which this harbinger and spy brings out of it. In either case, we may hope, our Author, who loves the Germans in his way, and would have his countrymen brought into closer acquaintance with them, will feel that, in purpose at least, we are co-operating with him.

First, then, be it admitted without hesitation, that Mr. Taylor, in respect of general talent and acquirement, takes his place above all our expositors of German things; that his Book is greatly the most important we yet have on this subject. Here are upwards of fourteen hundred solid pages of commentary, narrative and translation, submitted to the English reader; numerous statements and personages, hitherto unheard of, or vaguely heard of, stand here in fixed shape; there is, if no map of intellectual Germany, some first attempt at such. Farther, we are to state that our Author is a zealous, earnest man; no hollow dilettante hunting after shadows, and prating he knows not what; but a substantial, distinct, remarkably decisive man; has his own opinion on many subjects, and can express it adequately. We should say, precision of idea was a striking quality of his: no vague transcendentalism, or mysticism of any kind; nothing but what is measurable and tangible, and has a meaning which he that runs may read, is to be apprehended here. He is a man of much classical and other reading; of much singular reflection; stands on his own basis, quiescent yet immovable: a certain rugged vigour of natural power, interesting even in its distortions, is everywhere manifest. Lastly, we venture to assign him the rare merit of honesty: he speaks out in plain English what is in him; seems heartily convinced of his own doctrines, and preaches them because they are

his own; not for the sake of sale, but of truth; at worst, for the sake of making proselytes.

On the strength of which properties, we reckon that this *Historic Survey* may, under certain conditions, be useful and acceptable to two classes. First, to incipient students of German Literature in the original; who in any History of their subject, even in a bare catalogue, will find help; though for that class, unfortunately, Mr. Taylor's help is much diminished in value by several circumstances; by this one, were there no other, that he nowhere cites any authority: the path he has opened may be the true or the false one; for farther researches and lateral surveys there is no direction or indication. But, secondly, we reckon that this Book may be welcome to many of the much larger miscellaneous class, who read less for any specific object than for the sake of reading; to whom any Book that will, either in the way of contradiction or confirmation, by new wisdom or new perversion of wisdom, stir-up the stagnant inner man, is a windfall; the rather if it bring some historic tidings also, fit for remembering, and repeating; above all, if, as in this case, the style with many singularities have some striking merits, and so the book be a light exercise, even an entertainment.

To such praise and utility the Work is justly entitled; but this is not all it pretends to; and more cannot without many limitations be conceded it. Unluckily the *Historic Survey* is not what it should be, but only what it would be. Our Author hastens to correct in his Preface any false hopes his Titlepage may have excited: 'A complete History of German Poetry,' it seems, 'is 'hardly within reach of his local command of library: so compre-'hensive an undertaking would require another residence in a 'country from which he has now been separated more than forty 'years:' and which various considerations render it unadvisable to revisit. Nevertheless, 'having long been in the practice of 'importing the productions of its fine literature,' and of working in that material, as critic, biographer and translator, for more than one 'periodic publication of this country,' he has now composed 'introductory and connective sections,' filled-up deficiencies, retrenched superfluities; and so, collecting and remodelling those 'successive contributions,' cements them together into the 'new and entire work' here offered to the public. 'With fragments,' he concludes, 'long 'since hewn, as it were, and sculptured, I attempt to construct an 'English Temple of Fame to the memory of those German Poets.'

There is no doubt but a Complete History of German Poetry exceeds any local or universal command of books which a British man can at this day enjoy; and, farther, presents obstacles of an infinitely more serious character than this. A History of German, or of any national Poetry, would form, taken in its complete sense, one of the most arduous enterprises any writer could engage in. Poetry, were it the rudest, so it be sincere, is the attempt which man makes to render his existence harmonious, the utmost he can do for that end: it springs therefore from his whole feelings, opinions, activity, and takes its character from these. It may be called the music of his whole manner of being; and, historically considered, is the test how far Music, or Freedom, existed therein; how far the feeling of Love, of Beauty and Dignity, could be elicited from that peculiar situation of his, and from the views he there had of Life and Nature, of the Universe, internal and external. Hence, in any measure to understand the Poetry, to estimate its worth and historical meaning, we ask as a quite fundamental inquiry: What that situation was? Thus the History of a nation's Poetry is the essence of its History, political, economic, scientific, religious. With all these the complete Historian of a national Poetry will be familiar; the national physiognomy, in its finest traits, and through its successive stages of growth, will be clear to him: he will discern the grand spiritual Tendency of each period, what was the highest Aim and Enthusiasm of mankind in each, and how one epoch naturally evolved itself from the other. He has to record the highest Aim of a nation, in its successive directions and developments; for by this the Poetry of the nation modulates itself; this *is* the Poetry of the nation.

Such were the primary essence of a true History of Poetry; the living principle round which all detached facts and phenomena, all separate characters of Poems and Poets, would fashion themselves into a coherent whole, if they are by any means to cohere. To accomplish such a work for any Literature would require not only all outward aids, but an excellent inward faculty: all telescopes and observatories were of no avail, without the seeing eye and the understanding heart.

Doubtless, as matters stand, such models remain in great part ideal; the stinted result of actual practice must not be too rigidly tried by them. In our language, we have yet no example of such a performance. Neither elsewhere, except perhaps in the well-meant, but altogether ineffectual, attempt of Denina, among the

Italians, and in some detached, though far more successful, sketches by German writers, is there any that we know of. To expect an English History of German Literature in this style were especially unreasonable; where not only the man to write it, but the people to read and enjoy it are wanting. Some *Historic Survey*, wherein such an ideal standard, if not attained, if not approached, might be faithfully kept in view, and endeavoured after, would suffice us. Neither need such a Survey, even as a British Surveyor might execute it, be deficient in striking objects, and views of a general interest. There is the spectacle of a great people, closely related to us in blood, language, character, advancing through fifteen centuries of culture; with the eras and changes that have distinguished the like career in other nations. Nay, perhaps, the intellectual history of the Germans is not without peculiar attraction, on two grounds: first, that they are a separate unmixed people; that in them one of the two grand stem-tribes, from which all modern European countries derive their population and speech, is seen growing up distinct, and in several particulars following its own course: secondly, that by accident and by desert, the Germans have more than once been found playing the highest part in European culture; at more than one era the grand Tendencies of Europe have first embodied themselves into action in Germany, the main battle between the New and the Old has been fought and gained there. We mention only the Swiss Revolt, and Luther's Reformation. The Germans have not indeed so many classical works to exhibit as some other nations; a Shakspeare, a Dante, has not yet been recognised among them; nevertheless, they too have had their Teachers and inspired Singers; and in regard to popular Mythology, traditionary possessions and spirit, what we may call the *inarticulate* Poetry of a nation, and what is the element of its spoken or written Poetry, they will be found superior to any other modern people.

The Historic Surveyor of German Poetry will observe a remarkable nation struggling out of Paganism; fragments of that stern Superstition, saved from the general wreck, and still, amid the new order of things, carrying back our view, in faint reflexes, into the dim primeval time. By slow degrees the chaos of the Northern Immigrations settles into a new and fairer world; arts advance; little by little a fund of Knowledge, of Power over Nature, is accumulated by man; feeble glimmerings, even of a higher knowledge, of a poetic, break forth; till at length in the *Swabian Era*,

as it is named, a blaze of true though simple Poetry bursts over Germany, more splendid, we might say, than the Troubadour Period of any other nation; for that famous *Nibelungen Song*, produced, at least ultimately fashioned in those times, and still so significant in these, is altogether without parallel elsewhere.

To this period, the essence of which was young Wonder, and an enthusiasm for which Chivalry was still the fit exponent, there succeeds, as was natural, a period of Inquiry, a Didactic period; wherein, among the Germans, as elsewhere, many a Hugo von Trimberg delivers wise saws, and moral apophthegms, to the general edification: later, a Town-clerk of Strasburg sees his *Ship of Fools* translated into all living languages, twice into Latin, and read by Kings; the Apologue of *Reynard the Fox* gathering itself together, from sources remote and near, assumes its Low-German vesture, and becomes the darling of high and low; nay still lives with us in rude genial vigour, as one of the most remarkable indigenous productions of the Middle Ages. Nor is acted poetry of this kind wanting; the Spirit of Inquiry translates itself into Deeds which are poetical, as well as into words: already at the opening of the fourteenth century, Germany witnesses the first assertion of political right, the first vindication of Man against Nobleman; in the early history of the German Swiss. And again, two centuries later, the first assertion of intellectual right, the first vindication of Man against Clergyman; in the history of Luther's Reformation. Meanwhile the Press has begun its incalculable task; the indigenous Fiction of the Germans, what we have called their inarticulate Poetry, issues in innumerable *Volksbücher* (People's-Books), the progeny and kindred of which still live in all European countries: the People have their Tragedy and their Comedy; *Tyll Eulenspiegel* shakes every diaphragm with laughter; the rudest heart quails with awe at the wild mythus of *Faust*.

With Luther, however, the Didactic Tendency has reached its poetic acme; and now we must see it assume a prosaic character, and Poetry for a long while decline. The Spirit of Inquiry, of Criticism, is pushed beyond the limits, or too exclusively cultivated: what had done so much, is supposed capable of doing all; Understanding is alone listened to, while Fancy and Imagination languish inactive, or are forcibly stifled; and all poetic culture gradually dies away. As if with the high resolute genius, and noble achievements, of its Luthers and Huttens, the genius of the country had exhausted itself, we behold generation after generation

of mere Prosaists succeed these high Psalmists. Science indeed advances, practical manipulation in all kinds improves; Germany has its Copernics, Hevels, Guerickes, Keplers; later, a Leibnitz opens the path of true Logic, and teaches the mysteries of Figure and Number: but the finer Education of mankind seems at a stand. Instead of Poetic recognition and worship, we have stolid Theologic controversy, or still shallower Freethinking; pedantry, servility, mode-hunting, every species of Idolatry and Affectation holds sway. The World has lost its beauty, Life its infinite majesty, as if the Author of it were no longer divine: instead of admiration and creation of the True, there is at best criticism and denial of the False; to Luther there has succeeded Thomasius. In this era, so unpoetical for all Europe, Germany, torn in pieces by a Thirty-Years War, and its consequences, is pre-eminently prosaic; its few Singers are feeble echoes of foreign models little better than themselves. No Shakspeare, no Milton appears there; such indeed would have appeared earlier, if at all, in the current of German history: but instead, they have only at best Opitzes, Flemmings, Logaus, as we had our Queen-Anne Wits; or, in their Lohensteins, Gryphs, Hoffmannswaldaus, though in inverse order, an unintentional parody of our Drydens and Lees.

Nevertheless from every moral death there is a new birth; in this wondrous course of his, man may indeed linger, but cannot retrograde or stand still. In the middle of last century, from among Parisian Erotics, rickety Sentimentalism, Court aperies, and hollow Dulness striving in all hopeless courses, we behold the giant spirit of Germany awaken as from long slumber; shake away these worthless fetters, and by its Lessings and Klopstocks, announce, in true German dialect, that the Germans also are men. Singular enough in its circumstances was this resuscitation; the work as of a 'spirit on the waters,' a movement agitating the great popular mass; for it was favoured by no court or king: all sovereignties, even the pettiest, had abandoned their native Literature, their native language, as if to irreclaimable barbarism. The greatest king produced in Germany since Barbarossa's time, Frederick the Second, looked coldly on the native endeavour, and saw no hope but in aid from France. However, the native endeavour prospered without aid: Lessing's announcement did not die away with him, but took clearer utterance, and more inspired modulation from his followers; in whose works it now speaks, not to Germany alone, but to the whole world. The results of this last Period of German

Literature are of deep significance, the depth of which is perhaps but now becoming visible. Here too, it may be, as in other cases, the Want of the Age has first taken voice and shape in Germany; that change from Negation to Affirmation, from Destruction to Re-construction, for which all thinkers in every country are now prepared, is perhaps already in action there. In the nobler Literature of the Germans, say some, lie the rudiments of a new spiritual era, which it is for this and for succeeding generations to work out and realise. The ancient creative Inspiration, it would seem, is still possible in these ages; at a time when Scepticism, Frivolity, Sensuality, had withered Life into a sand-desert, and our gayest prospect was but the *false mirage*, and even our Byrons could utter but a death-song or despairing howl, the Moses'-wand has again struck from that Horeb refreshing streams, towards which the better spirits of all nations are hastening, if not to drink, yet wistfully and hopefully to examine. If the older Literary History of Germany has the common attractions, which in a greater or a less degree belong to the successive epochs of other such Histories; its newer Literature, and the historical delineation of this, has an interest such as belongs to no other.

It is somewhat in this way, as appears to us, that the growth of German Poetry must be construed and represented by the historian: these are the general phenomena and vicissitudes, which, if elucidated by proper individual instances, by specimens fitly chosen, presented in natural sequence, and worked by philosophy into union, would make a valuable book; on any and all of which the observations and researches of so able an inquirer as Mr. Taylor would have been welcome. Sorry are we to declare that of all this, which constitutes the essence of anything calling itself *Historic Survey*, there is scarcely a vestige in the Book before us. The question, What is the German mind; what is the culture of the German mind; what course has Germany followed in that matter; what are its national characteristics as manifested therein? appears not to have presented itself to the Author's thought. No theorem of Germany and its intellectual progress, not even a false one, has he been at pains to construct for himself. We believe, it is impossible for the most assiduous reader to gather from these three Volumes any portraiture of the national mind of Germany, not to say in its successive phases and the historical sequence of these, but in any one phase or condition. The Work is made up of critical, biographical, bibliographical dissertations, and notices concerning this

and the other individual poet; interspersed with large masses of translation; and except that all these are strung together in the order of time, has no historical feature whatever. Many literary lives as we read, the nature of literary life in Germany, what sort of moral, economical, intellectual element it is that a German writer lives in and works in,—will nowhere manifest itself. Indeed, far from depicting Germany, scarcely on more than one or two occasions does our Author even look at it, or so much as remind us that it were capable of being depicted. On these rare occasions too, we are treated with such philosophic insight as the following: 'The Germans are not an imitative, but they are a listening people: 'they can do nothing without directions, and anything with them. 'As soon as Gottsched's rules for writing German correctly had 'made their appearance, everybody began to write German.' Or we have theoretic hints, resting on no basis, about some new tribunal of taste which at one time had formed itself 'in the mess-rooms of the Prussian officers'!

In a word, the 'connecting sections,' or indeed by what alchymy such a congeries could be connected into a *Historic Survey*, have not become plain to us. Considerable part of it consists of quite detached little Notices, mostly of altogether insignificant men; heaped together as separate fragments; fit, had they been unexceptionable in other respects, for a Biographical Dictionary, but nowise for a *Historic Survey*. Then we have dense masses of Translation, sometimes good, but seldom of the characteristic pieces; an entire *Iphigenia*, an entire *Nathan the Wise;* nay worse, a *Sequel to Nathan*, which when we have conscientiously struggled to peruse, the Author turns round, without any apparent smile, and tells us that it is by a nameless writer, and worth nothing. Not only Mr. Taylor's own Translations, which are generally good, but contributions from a whole body of labourers in that department are given: for example, near sixty pages, very ill rendered by a Miss Plumtre, of a *Life of Kotzebue*, concerning whom, or whose life, death or burial, there is now no curiosity extant among men. If in that 'English Temple of Fame,' with its hewn and sculptured stones, those Biographical-Dictionary fragments and fractions are so much dry *rubble-work* of whinstone, is not this quite despicable *Autobiography of Kotzebue* a rood or two of mere *turf;* which, as ready-cut, our architect, to make up measure, has packed in among his marble ashlar; whereby the whole wall will the sooner bulge?

But indeed, generally speaking, symmetry is not one of his architectural rules. Thus in Volume First we have a long story translated from a German Magazine, about certain antique Hyperborean *Baresarks*, amusing enough, but with no more reference to Germany than to England; while in return the *Nibelungen Lied* is dispatched in something less than one line, and comes no more to light. Tyll Eulenspiegel, who was not an 'anonymous Satire, entitled the *Mirror of Owls*,' but a real flesh-and-blood hero of that name, whose tombstone is standing to this day near Lübeck, has some four lines for his share; *Reineke de Fos* about as many, which also are inaccurate. Again, if Wieland have his half-volume, and poor Ernest Schulze, poor Zacharias Werner, and numerous other poor men, each his chapter; Luther also has his two sentences, and is in these weighed against—Dr. Isaac Watts. Ulrich Hutten does not occur here; Hans Sachs and his Mastersingers escape notice, or even do worse; the poetry of the Reformation is not alluded to. The name of Jean Paul Friedrich Richter appears not to be known to Mr. Taylor; or, if want of rhyme was to be the test of a prosaist, how comes Salomon Gesner here? Stranger still, Ludwig Tieck is not once mentioned; neither is Novalis; neither is Maler Müller. But why dwell on these omissions and commissions? Is not all included in this one well-nigh incredible fact, that one of the largest articles in the Book, a tenth part of the whole *Historic Survey of German Poetry*, treats of that delectable genius, August von Kotzebue?

The truth is, this *Historic Survey* has not anything historical in it; but is a mere aggregate of Dissertations, Translations, Notices and Notes, bound together indeed by the circumstance that they are all about German Poetry, 'about it and about it;' also by the sequence of time, and still more strongly by the Bookbinder's pack-thread; but by no other sufficient tie whatever. The authentic title, were not some mercantile varnish allowable in such cases, might be: 'General Jail-delivery of all Publications 'and Manuscripts, original or translated, composed or borrowed, on 'the subject of German Poetry; by' &c.

To such Jail-delivery, at least when it is from the prison of Mr. Taylor's Desk at Norwich, and relates to a subject in the actual predicament of German Poetry among us, we have no fundamental objection: and for the name, now that it is explained, there is nothing in a name; a rose by any other name would smell as sweet. However, even in this lower and lowest point of view, the

Historic Survey is liable to grave objections; its worth is of no unmixed character. We mentioned that Mr. Taylor did not often cite authorities: for which doubtless he may have his reasons. If it be not from French Prefaces, and the *Biographie Universelle*, and other the like sources, we confess ourselves altogether at a loss to divine whence any reasonable individual gathered such notices as these. Books indeed are scarce; but the most untoward situation may command Wachler's *Vorlesungen*, Horn's *Poesie und Beredsamkeit*, Meister's *Characteristiken*, Koch's *Compendium*, or some of the thousand-and-one compilations of that sort, numerous and accurate in German, more than in any other literature: at all events, Jördens's *Lexicon Deutscher Dichter und Prosaisten*, and the world-renowned Leipzig *Conversations-Lexicon*. No one of these appears to have been in Mr. Taylor's possession;—Bouterwek alone, and him he seems to have consulted perfunctorily. A certain proportion of errors in such a work is pardonable and unavoidable: scarcely so the proportion observed here. The *Historic Survey* abounds with errors, perhaps beyond any book it has ever been our lot to review.

Of these indeed many are harmless enough: as, for instance, where we learn that Görres was born in 1804 (not in 1776): though in that case he must have published his *Shah-Namch* at the age of three years: or where it is said that Werner's epitaph 'begs Mary Magdalene to pray for his soul,' which it does not do, if indeed any one cared what it did. Some are of a quite mysterious nature; either impregnated with a wit which continues obstinately latent, or indicating that, in spite of Railways and Newspapers, some portions of this Island are still singularly impermeable. For example: 'It (*Götz von Berlichingen*) was admir-'ably translated into English in 1799, at Edinburgh, by *William* 'Scott, Advocate; no doubt, the same person who, under the 'poetical but assumed name of *Walter*, has since become the most 'extensively popular of the British writers.'—Others, again, are the fruit of a more culpable ignorance; as when we hear that Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit* is literally meant to be a fictitious narrative, and no genuine Biography; that his *Stella* ends quietly in Bigamy (to Mr. Taylor's satisfaction), which, however the French translation may run, in the original it certainly does not. Mr. Taylor likewise complains that his copy of *Faust* is incomplete: so, we grieve to state, is ours. Still worse is it when speaking of distinguished men, who probably have been at pains

to veil their sentiments on certain subjects, our Author takes it upon him to lift such veil, and with perfect composure pronounces this to be a Deist, that a Pantheist, that other an Atheist, often without any due foundation. It is quite erroneous, for example, to describe Schiller by any such unhappy term as that of Deist: it is very particularly erroneous to say that Goethe anywhere 'avows himself an Atheist,' that he 'is a Pantheist;'—indeed, that he is, was, or is like to be any *ist* to which Mr. Taylor would attach just meaning.

But on the whole, what struck us most in these errors is their surprising number. In the way of our calling, we at first took pencil, with intent to mark such transgressions; but soon found it too appalling a task, and so laid aside our black-lead and our art (*cæstus artemque*). Happily, however, a little natural invention, assisted by some tincture of arithmetic, came to our aid. Six pages, studied for that end, we did mark; finding therein thirteen errors: the pages are 167 to 173 of Volume Third, and still in our copy have their marginal stigmas, which can be vindicated before a jury of Authors. Now if 6 give 13, who sees not that 1455, the entire number of pages, will give 3152 and a fraction? Or, allowing for Translations, which are freer from errors, and for philosophical Discussions, wherein the errors are of another sort; nay, granting with a perhaps unwarranted liberality, that these six pages may yield too high an average, which we know not that they do,—may not, in round numbers, Fifteen Hundred be given as the approximate amount, not of errors indeed, yet of mistakes and misstatements, in these three octavos?

Of errors in doctrine, false critical judgments and all sorts of philosophical hallucination, the number, more difficult to ascertain, is also unfortunately great. Considered, indeed, as in any measure a picture of what is remarkable in German Poetry, this *Historic Survey* is one great Error. We have to object to Mr. Taylor on all grounds; that his views are often partial and inadequate, sometimes quite false and imaginary; that the highest productions of German Literature, those works in which properly its characteristic and chief worth lie, are still as a sealed book to him; or what is worse, an open book that he will not read, but pronounces to be filled with blank paper. From a man of such intellectual vigour, who has studied his subject so long, we should not have expected such a failure.

Perhaps the main principle of it may be stated, if not accounted

for, in this one circumstance, that the *Historic Survey*, like its Author, stands separated from Germany by 'more than forty years.' During this time Germany has been making unexampled progress; while our Author has either advanced in the other direction, or continued quite stationary. Forty years, it is true, make no difference in a classical Poem; yet much in the readers of that Poem, and its position towards these. Forty years are but a small period in some Histories, but in the history of German Literature, the most rapidly extending, incessantly fluctuating object even in the spiritual world, they make a great period. In Germany, within these forty years, how much has been united, how much has fallen asunder! Kant has superseded Wolf; Fichte, Kant; Schelling, Fichte; and now, it seems, Hegel is bent on superseding Schelling. Baumgarten has given place to Schlegel; the *Deutsche Bibliothek* to the Berlin *Hermes:* Lessing still towers in the distance like an Earthborn Atlas; but in the poetical Heaven, Wieland and Klopstock burn fainter, as new and more radiant luminaries have arisen. Within the last forty years, German Literature has become national, idiomatic, distinct from all others; by its productions during that period, it is either something or nothing.

Nevertheless it is still at the distance of forty years, sometimes we think it must be fifty, that Mr. Taylor stands. 'The fine Literature of Germany,' no doubt he has 'imported;' yet only with the eyes of 1780 does he read it. Thus Sulzer's *Universal Theory* continues still to be his road-book to the temple of German taste; almost as if the German critic should undertake to measure *Waverley* and *Manfred* by the scale of Blair's *Lectures.* Sulzer was an estimable man, who did good service in his day; but about forty years ago sank into a repose, from which it would now be impossible to rouse him. The superannuation of Sulzer appears not once to be suspected by our Author; as indeed little of all the great work that has been done or undone in Literary Germany, within that period, has become clear to him. The far-famed *Xenien* of Schiller's *Musenalmanach* are once mentioned, in some half-dozen lines, wherein also there are more than half-a-dozen inaccuracies, and one rather egregious error. Of the results that followed from these *Xenien;* of Tieck, Wackenroder, the two Schlegels and Novalis, whose critical Union, and its works, filled all Germany with tumult, discussion, and at length with new conviction, no whisper transpires here. The *New School*, with all

that it taught, untaught and mistaught, is not so much as alluded to. Schiller and Goethe, with all the poetic world they created, remain invisible, or dimly seen: Kant is a sort of Political Reformer. It must be stated with all distinctness, that of the newer and higher German Literature, no reader will obtain the smallest understanding from these Volumes.

Indeed, quite apart from his acquaintance with actual Germany, there is that in the structure or habit of Mr. Taylor's mind which singularly unfits him for judging of such matters well. We must complain that he reads German Poetry, from first to last, with English eyes; will not accommodate himself to the spirit of the Literature he is investigating, and do his utmost, by loving endeavour, to win its secret from it; but plunges in headlong, and silently assuming that all this was written for him and for his objects, makes short work with it, and innumerable false conclusions. It is sad to see an honest traveller confidently gauging all foreign objects with a measure that will not mete them; trying German Sacred Oaks by their fitness for British shipbuilding; walking from Dan to Beersheba, and finding so little that he did not bring with him. This, we are too well aware, is the commonest of all errors, both with vulgar readers and with vulgar critics; but from Mr. Taylor we had expected something better; nay, let us confess, he himself now and then seems to attempt something better, but too imperfectly succeeds in it.

The truth is, Mr. Taylor, though a man of talent, as we have often admitted, and as the world well knows, though a downright, independent and to all appearance most praiseworthy man, is one of the most peculiar critics to be found in our times. As we construe him from these Volumes, the basis of his nature seems to be Polemical; his whole view of the world, of its Poetry, and whatever else it holds, has a militant character. According to this philosophy, the whole duty of man, it would almost appear, is to lay aside the opinion of his grandfather. Doubtless, it is natural, it is indispensable, for a man to lay aside the opinion of his grandfather, when it will no longer hold together on him; but we had imagined that the great and infinitely harder duty was: To turn the opinion that does hold together to some account. However, it is not in receiving the New, and creating good with it, but solely in pulling to pieces the Old, that Mr. Taylor will have us employed. Often, in the course of these pages, might the British reader sorrowfully exclaim: "Alas! is this the year of grace 1831,

and are we still *here?* Armed with the hatchet and tinder-box; still no symptom of the sower's sheet and plough?" These latter, for our Author, are implements of the dark ages; the ground is full of thistles and jungle; cut down and spare not. A singular aversion to Priests, something like a natural horror and hydrophobia, gives him no rest night nor day; the gist of all his speculations is to drive down more or less effectual palisades against that class of persons; nothing that he does but they interfere with or threaten: the first question he asks of every passer-by, be it German Poet, Philosopher, Farce-writer, is: "Arian or Trinitarian? Wilt thou help me, or not?" Long as he has now laboured, and though calling himself Philosopher, Mr. Taylor has not yet succeeded in sweeping his arena clear; but still painfully struggles in the questions of Naturalism and Supernaturalism, Liberalism and Servilism.

Agitated by this zeal, with its fitful hope and fear, it is that he goes through Germany; scenting-out Infidelity with the nose of an ancient Heresy-hunter, though for opposite purposes; and, like a recruiting-sergeant, beating aloud for recruits; nay, where in any corner he can spy a tall man, clutching at him, to crimp him or impress him. Goethe's and Schiller's creed we saw specified above; those of Lessing and Herder are scarcely less edifying; but take rather this sagacious exposition of Kant's Philosophy:

'The Alexandrian writings do not differ so widely as is commonly apprehended from those of the Königsberg School; for they abound with passages, which, while they seem to flatter the popular credulity, resolve into allegory the stories of the gods, and into an illustrative personification the soul of the world; thus insinuating, to the more alert and penetrating, the speculative rejection of opinions with which they are encouraged and commanded in action to comply. With analogous spirit, Professor Kant studiously introduces a distinction between Practical and Theoretical Reason; and while he teaches that rational conduct will indulge the hypothesis of a God, a revelation, and a future state (this, we presume, is meant by calling them *inferences of Practical Reason*), he pretends that Theoretical Reason can adduce no one satisfactory argument in their behalf: so that his morality amounts to a defence of the old adage, "Think with the wise, and act with the vulgar;" a plan of behaviour which secures to the vulgar an ultimate victory over the wise. * * * Philosophy is to be withdrawn within a narrower circle of the initiated; and these must be induced to conspire in favouring a vulgar superstition. This can best be accomplished by enveloping with enigmatic jargon the

topics of discussion; by employing a cloudy phraseology, which may intercept from below the war-whoop of impiety, and from above the evulgation of infidelity; by contriving a kind of "cipher of illuminism," in which public discussions of the most critical nature can be carried on from the press, without alarming the prejudices of the people, or exciting the precautions of the magistrate. Such a cipher, in the hands of an adept, is the dialect of Kant. Add to this the notorious Gallicanism of his opinions, which must endear him to the patriotism of the philosophers of the Lyceum; and it will appear probable that the reception of his forms of syllogising should extend from Germany to France; should completely and exclusively establish itself on the Continent; entomb with the reasonings the Reason of the modern world; and form the tasteless fretwork which seems about to convert the halls of liberal Philosophy into churches of mystical Supernaturalism.'

These are indeed fearful symptoms, and enough to quicken the diligence of any recruiting officer that has the good cause at heart. Reasonably may such officer, beleaguered with 'witchcraft and demonology, trinitarianism, intolerance,' and a considerable list of *et-ceteras*, and still seeing no hearty followers of his flag, but a mere Falstaff regiment, smite upon his thigh, and, in moments of despondency, lament that Christianity had ever entered, or, as we here have it, 'intruded' into Europe at all; that, at least, some small slip of heathendom, 'Scandinavia, for instance,' had not been 'left to its natural course, unmisguided by ecclesiastical missionaries and monastic institutions. Many superstitions, which have 'fatigued the credulity, clouded the intellect and impaired the 'security of man, and which, alas, but too naturally followed in the 'train of the Sacred Books, would there, perhaps, never have 'struck root; and in one corner of the world, the inquiries of 'reason might have found an earlier asylum, and asserted a less 'circumscribed range.' Nevertheless, there is still hope, preponderating hope. 'The general tendency of the German school,' it would appear, could we but believe such tidings, 'is to teach 'French opinions in English forms.' Philosophy can now look down with some approving glances on Socinianism. Nay, the literature of Germany, 'very liberal and tolerant,' is gradually overflowing, even into the Slavonian nations, 'and will found, in 'new languages and climates, those latest inferences of a corrupt 'but instructed refinement, which are likely to rebuild the morality of the Ancients on the ruins of Christian Puritanism.'

Such retrospections and prospections bring to mind an absurd

rumour which, confounding our Author with his namesake, the celebrated Translator of Plato and Aristotle, represented him as being engaged in the repair and reëstablishment of the Pagan Religion. For such rumour, we are happy to state, there is not and was not the slightest foundation. Wieland may, indeed, at one time, have put some whims into his disciple's head; but Mr. Taylor is too solid a man to embark in speculations of that nature. Prophetic day-dreams are not practical projects; at all events, as we here see, it is not the old Pagan gods that we are to bring back, but only the ancient Pagan morality, a refined and reformed Paganism;—as some middle-aged householder, if distressed by tax-gatherers and duns, might resolve on becoming thirteen again, and a bird-nesting schoolboy. Let no timid layman apprehend any overflow of priests from Mr. Taylor, or even of gods. Is not this commentary on the hitherto so inexplicable conversion of Friedrich Leopold Count Stolberg enough to quiet every alarmist?

'On the Continent of Europe, the gentleman, and Frederic Leopold was emphatically so, is seldom brought up with much solicitude for any positive doctrine: among the Catholics, the moralist insists on the duty of conforming to the religion of one's ancestors; among the Protestants, on the duty of conforming to the religion of the magistrate: but Frederic Leopold seems to have invented a new point of honour, and a most rational one,—the duty of conforming to the religion of one's father-in-law.

'A young man is the happier, while single, for being unincumbered with any religious restraints; but when the time comes for submitting to matrimony, he will find the precedent of Frederic Leopold well entitled to consideration. A predisposition to conform to the religion of the father-in-law facilitates advantageous matrimonial connexions; it produces in a family the desirable harmony of religious profession; it secures the sincere education of the daughters in the faith of their mother; and it leaves the young men at liberty to apostatise in their turn, to exert their right of private judgment, and to choose a worship for themselves. Religion, if a blemish in the male, is surely a grace in the female sex: courage of mind may tend to acknowledge nothing above itself; but timidity is ever disposed to look upwards for protection, for consolation and for happiness.'

With regard to this latter point, whether Religion is 'a blemish in the male, and surely a grace in the female sex,' it is possible judgments may remain suspended: Courage of mind, indeed, will

prompt the squirrel to set itself in posture against an armed horseman; yet whether for men and women, who seem to stand, not only under the Galaxy and Stellar system, and under Immensity and Eternity, but even under any bare bodkin or drop of prussic acid, 'such courage of mind as may tend to acknowledge nothing above itself,' were ornamental or the contrary; whether, lastly, Religion is grounded on Fear, or on something infinitely higher and inconsistent with Fear,—may be questions. But they are of a kind we are not at present called to meddle with.

Mr. Taylor promulgates many other strange articles of faith, for he is a positive man, and has a certain quiet wilfulness; these, however, cannot henceforth much surprise us. He still calls the Middle Ages, during which nearly all the inventions and social institutions, whereby we yet live as civilised men, were originated or perfected, 'a Millennium of Darkness;' on the faith chiefly of certain long-past Pedants, who reckoned everything barren, because Chrysoloras had not yet come, and no Greek Roots grew there. Again, turning in the other direction, he criticises Luther's Reformation, and repeats that old and indeed quite foolish story of the Augustine Monk's having a merely commercial grudge against the Dominican; computes the quantity of blood shed for Protestantism; and, forgetting that men shed blood in all ages, for any cause and for no cause, for Sansculottism, for Bonapartism, thinks that, on the whole, the Reformation was an error and failure. Pity that Providence (as King Alphonso wished in the Astronomical case) had not created its man three centuries sooner, and taken a little counsel from him! On the other hand, 'Voltaire's Reformation' was successful; and here, for once, Providence was right. Will Mr. Taylor mention what it was that Voltaire *reformed*? Many things he *de*-formed, deservedly and undeservedly; but the thing that he *formed* or *re*-formed is still unknown to the world.

It is perhaps unnecessary to add, that Mr. Taylor's whole Philosophy is sensual; that is, he recognises nothing that cannot be weighed, measured, and, with one or the other organ, eaten and digested. Logic is his only lamp of life; where this fails, the region of Creation terminates. For him there is no Invisible, Incomprehensible; whosoever, under any name, believes in an Invisible, he treats, with leniency and the loftiest tolerance, as a mystic and lunatic; and if the unhappy crack-brain has any handicraft, literary or other, allows him to go at large, and work at it. Withal he is a great-hearted, strong-minded, and, in many points,

interesting man. There is a majestic composure in the attitude he has assumed; massive, immovable, uncomplaining, he sits in a world of Delirium; and for his Future looks with sure faith,—only in the direction of the Past. We take him to be a man of sociable turn, not without kindness; at all events of the most perfect courtesy. He despises the entire Universe, yet speaks respectfully of Translators from the German, and always says that they 'english beautifully.' A certain mild Dogmatism sits well on him; peaceable, incontrovertible, uttering the palpably absurd as if it were a mere truism. On the other hand, there are touches of a grave, scientific obscenity, which are questionable. This word Obscenity we use with reference to our readers, and might also add Profanity, but not with reference to Mr. Taylor; he, as we said, is scientific merely; and where there is no *cœnum* and no *fanum*, there can be no obscenity and no profanity.

To a German we might have compressed all this long description into a single word: Mr. Taylor is simply what they call a *Philister*; every fibre of him is Philistine. With us such men usually take into Politics, and become Codemakers and Utilitarians: it was only in Germany that they ever meddled much with Literature; and there worthy Nicolai has long since terminated his Jesuit-hunt; no Adelung now writes books, *Ueber die Nützlichkeit der Empfindung* (On the Utility of Feeling). Singular enough, now, when that old species had been quite extinct for almost half a century in their own land, appears a natural-born English Philistine, made in all points as they were. With wondering welcome we hail the Strongboned; almost as we might a resuscitated Mammoth. Let no David choose smooth stones from the brook to sling at him: is he not our own Goliath, whose limbs were made in England, whose thews and sinews any soil might be proud of? Is he not, as we said, a man that can stand on his own legs without collapsing when left by himself? In these days, one of the greatest rarities, almost prodigies.

We cheerfully acquitted Mr. Taylor of Religion; but must expect less gratitude when we farther deny him any feeling for true Poetry, as indeed the feelings for Religion and for Poetry of this sort are one and the same. Of Poetry Mr. Taylor knows well what will make a grand, especially a large, *picture* in the imagination: he has even a creative gift of this kind himself, as his style will often testify; but much more he does not know. How indeed should he? Nicolai, too, 'judged of Poetry as he

did of Brunswick Mum, simply by *tasting* it.' Mr. Taylor assumes, as a fact known to all thinking creatures, that Poetry is neither more nor less than 'a stimulant.' Perhaps above five hundred times in the *Historic Survey* we see this doctrine expressly acted on. Whether the piece to be judged of is a Poetical Whole, and has what the critics have named a genial life, and what that life is, he inquires not; but, at best, whether it is a Logical Whole, and for most part, simply, whether it is stimulant. The praise is, that it has fine situations, striking scenes, agonising scenes, harrows his feelings, and the like. Schiller's *Robbers* he finds to be stimulant; his *Maid of Orleans* is not stimulant, but 'among the weakest of his tragedies, and composed apparently in ill health.' The author of *Pizarro* is supremely stimulant; he of *Torquato Tasso* is 'too quotidian to be stimulant.' We had understood that alcohol was stimulant in all its shapes; opium also, tobacco, and indeed the whole class of narcotics; but heretofore found Poetry in none of the Pharmacopœias. Nevertheless, it is edifying to observe with what fearless consistency Mr. Taylor, who is no half-man, carries through this theory of stimulation. It lies privily in the heart of many a reader and reviewer; nay Schiller, at one time, said that 'Molière's old woman seemed to have become sole Editress of all Reviews;' but seldom, in the history of Literature, has she had the honesty to unveil and ride triumphant, as in these Volumes. Mr. Taylor discovers that the only Poet to be classed with Homer is Tasso; that Shakspeare's Tragedies are cousins-german to those of Otway; that poor moaning, monotonous Macpherson is an epic poet. Lastly, he runs a laboured parallel between Schiller, Goethe and Kotzebue; one is more this, the other more that; one strives hither, the other thither, through the whole string of critical predicables; almost as if we should compare scientifically Milton's *Paradise Lost*, the *Prophecies of Isaiah* and Mat Lewis's *Tales of Terror*.

Such is Mr. Taylor; a strong-hearted oak, but in an unkindly soil, and beat upon from infancy by Trinitarian and Tory South-westers: such is the result which native vigour, wind-storms and thirsty mould have made out among them; grim boughs dishevelled in multangular complexity, and of the stiffness of brass; a tree crooked every way, unwedgeable and gnarled. What bandages or cordages of ours, or of man's, could strengthen it, now that it has grown there for half a century? We simply point out that there is excellent tough *knee-timber* in it, and of straight timber little or none.

In fact, taking Mr. Taylor as he is and must be, and keeping a perpetual account and protest with him on these peculiarities of his, we find that on various parts of his subject he has profitable things to say. The Göttingen group of Poets, 'Bürger and his set,' such as they were, are pleasantly delineated. The like may be said of the somewhat earlier Swiss brotherhood, whereof Bodmer and Breitinger are the central figures; though worthy wonderful Lavater, the wandering Physiognomist and Evangelist, and Protestant Pope, should not have been first forgotten, and then crammed into an insignificant paragraph. Lessing, again, is but poorly managed; his main performance, as was natural, reckoned to be the writing of *Nathan the Wise:* we have no original portrait here, but a pantagraphical reduced copy of some foreign sketches or scratches; quite unworthy of such a man, in such a historical position, standing on the confines of Light and Darkness, like Day on the misty mountain tops. Of Herder also there is much omitted; the *Geschichte der Menschheit* scarcely alluded to; yet some features are given, accurately and even beautifully. A slow-rolling grandiloquence is in Mr. Taylor's best passages, of which this is one: if no poetic light, he has occasionally a glow of true rhetorical heat. Wieland is lovingly painted, yet on the whole faithfully, as he looked some fifty years ago, if not as he now looks; this is the longest article in the *Historic Survey*, and much too long; those Paganising *Dialogues* in particular had never much worth, and at present have scarcely any.

Perhaps the best of all these Essays is that on Klopstock. The sphere of Klopstock's genius does not transcend Mr. Taylor's scale of poetic altitudes; though it perhaps reaches the highest grade there; the 'stimulant' theory recedes into the background; indeed there is a rhetorical amplitude and brilliancy in the *Messias*, which elicits in our critic an instinct truer than his philosophy is. He has honestly studied the *Messias*, and presents a clear outline of it; neither has the still purer spirit of Klopstock's *Odes* escaped him. We have English Biographies of Klopstock, and a miserable Version of his great Work; but perhaps there is no writing in our language that offers so correct an emblem of him as this analysis. Of the *Odes* we shall here present one, in Mr. Taylor's translation, which, though in prose, the reader will not fail to approve of. It is, perhaps, the finest passage in this whole *Historic Survey*.

'THE TWO MUSES.

'I saw—tell me, was I beholding what now happens, or was I beholding futurity?—I saw with the Muse of Britain the Muse of Germany engaged in competitory race,—flying warm to the goal of coronation.

'Two goals, where the prospect terminates, bordered the career: Oaks of the forest shaded the one; near to the other waved Palms in the evening shadow.

'Accustomed to contest, stepped she from Albion proudly into the arena; as she stepped, when, with the Grecian Muse and with her from the Capitol, she entered the lists.

'She beheld the young trembling rival, who trembled yet with dignity; glowing roses worthy of victory streamed flaming over her cheek, and her golden hair flew abroad.

'Already she retained with pain in her tumultuous bosom the contracted breath; already she hung bending forward towards the goal; already the herald was lifting the trumpet, and her eyes swam with intoxicating joy.

'Proud of her courageous rival, prouder of herself, the lofty Britoness measured, but with noble glance, thee, Tuiskone: "Yes, by the bards, I grew up with thee in the grove of oaks:

'"But a tale had reached me that thou wast no more. Pardon, O Muse, if thou beest immortal, pardon that I but now learn it. Yonder at the goal alone will I learn it.

'"There it stands. But dost thou see the still farther one, and its crowns also? This repress courage, this proud silence, this look which sinks fiery upon the ground, I know:

'"Yet weigh once again, ere the herald sound a note dangerous to thee. Am I not she who have measured myself with her from Thermopylæ, and with the stately one of the Seven Hills?"

'She spake: the earnest decisive moment drew nearer with the herald. "I love thee," answered quick with looks of flame Teutona; "Britoness, I love thee to enthusiasm;

'"But not warmer than immortality and those Palms. Touch, if so wills thy genius, touch them before me; yet will I, when thou seizest it, seize also the crown.

'"And, O, how I tremble! O ye Immortals, perhaps I may reach first the high goal: then, O, then, may thy breath attain my loose-streaming hair!"

'The herald shrilled. They flew with eagle-speed. The wide career smoked-up clouds of dust. I looked. Beyond the Oak billowed yet thicker the dust, and I lost them.'

'This beautiful allegory,' adds Mr. Taylor, 'requires no illus-'tration; but it constitutes one of the reasons for suspecting that 'the younger may eventually be the victorious Muse.' We hope not; but that the generous race may yet last through long centuries. Tuiskone has shot through a mighty space, since this Poet saw her: what if she were now slackening her speed, and the Britoness quickening hers?

If the Essay on Klopstock is the best, that on Kotzebue is undoubtedly the worst, in this Book, or perhaps in any book written by a man of ability in our day. It is one of those acts which, in the spirit of philanthropy, we could wish Mr. Taylor to conceal in profoundest secrecy; were it not that hereby the 'stimulant' theory, a heresy which still lurks here and there even in our better criticism, is in some sort brought to a crisis, and may the sooner depart from this world, or at least from the high places of it, into others more suitable. Kotzebue, whom all nations and kindreds and tongues and peoples, his own people the foremost, after playing with him for some foolish hour, have swept out of doors as a lifeless bundle of dyed rags, is here scientifically examined, measured, pulse-felt, and pronounced to be living, and a divinity. He has such prolific 'invention;' abounds so in 'fine situations,' in passionate scenes; is so soul-harrowing, so stimulant. The *Proceedings at Bow Street* are stimulant enough; neither are prolific invention, interesting situations, or soul-harrowing passion wanting among the *authors* (true creators) who promulgate their *works* there; least of all, if we follow them to Newgate and the gallows: but when did the *Morning Herald* think of inserting its *Police Reports* among our Anthologies? Mr. Taylor is at the pains to analyse very many of Kotzebue's productions, and translates copiously from two or three: how the Siberian Governor took-on when his daughter was about to run away with one Benjowsky, who, however, was enabled to surrender his prize, there on the beach, with sails hoisted, by 'looking at his wife's picture:' how the people 'lift young Burgundy from the Tun,' not indeed to drink him, for he is not wine but a Duke: how a certain stout-hearted West Indian, that has made a fortune, proposes marriage to his two sisters; but finding the ladies reluctant, solicits their serving-woman, whose reputation is not only cracked, but visibly quite rent asunder; accepts her nevertheless, with her thriving cherub, and is the happiest of men;—with more of the like sort. On the strength of which we are assured that, 'according to my judgment, Kotzebue is the greatest dramatic

'genius that Europe has evolved since Shakspeare.' Such is the table which Mr. Taylor has spread for pilgrims in the Prose Wilderness of Life: thus does he sit like a kind host, ready to carve; and though the viands and beverage are but, as it were, stewed garlic, Yarmouth herrings, and *blue-ruin*, praises them as 'stimulant,' and courteously presses the universe to fall to.

What a purveyor with this palate shall say to Nectar and Ambrosia, may be curious as a question in Natural History, but hardly otherwise. The most of what Mr. Taylor has written on Schiller, on Goethe, and the new Literature of Germany, a reader that loves him, as we honestly do, will consider as unwritten, or written in a state of somnambulism. He who has just quitted Kotzebue's Bear-garden and Fives-court, and pronounces it to be all stimulant and very good, what is there for him to do in the Hall of the Gods? He looks transiently in; asks with mild authority, "Arian or Trinitarian? Quotidian or Stimulant?" and receiving no answer but a hollow echo, which almost sounds like laughter, passes on, muttering that they are dumb idols, or mere Nürnberg waxwork.

It remains to notice Mr. Taylor's Translations. Apart from the choice of subjects, which in probably more than half the cases is unhappy, there is much to be said in favour of these. Compared with the average of British Translations, they may be pronounced of almost ideal excellence; compared with the best Translations extant,—for example, the German *Shakspeare, Homer, Calderon*,—they may still be called better than indifferent. One great merit Mr. Taylor has: rigorous adherence to his original; he endeavours at least to copy with all possible fidelity the turn of phrase, the tone, the very metre, whatever stands written for him. With the German language he has now had a long familiarity, and, what is no less essential, and perhaps still rarer among our Translators, has a decided understanding of English. All this of Mr. Taylor's own Translations: in the borrowed pieces, whereof there are several, we seldom, except indeed in those by Shelley and Coleridge, find much worth; sometimes a distinct worthlessness. Mr. Taylor has made no conscience of clearing those unfortunate performances even from their gross blunders. Thus, in that 'excellent version by Miss 'Plumtre,' we find this statement: 'Professor Müller could not 'utter a period without introducing the words *with under*, whether 'they had business there or not;' which statement, were it only on the ground that Professor Müller was not sent to Bedlam, there to

utter periods, we venture to deny. Doubtless his besetting sin was *mitunter*, which indeed means *at the same time*, or the like (etymologically, *with among*), but nowise *with under*. One other instance we shall give, from a much more important subject. Mr. Taylor admits that he does not make much of *Faust:* however, he inserts Shelley's version of the *Mayday Night;* and another scene, evidently rendered by quite a different artist. In this latter, Margaret is in the Cathedral during High-Mass, but her whole thoughts are turned inwards on a secret shame and sorrow: an Evil Spirit is whispering in her ear; the Choir chant fragments of the *Dies iræ;* she is like to choke and sink. In the original, this passage is in verse; and, we presume, in the translation also,—founding on the capital letters. The concluding lines are these:

MARGARET.

I feel imprison'd. The thick pillars gird me.
The vaults lour o'er me. Air, air! I faint!

EVIL SPIRIT.

Where wilt thou lie concealed? for sin and shame
Remain not hidden—woe is coming *down*.

THE CHOIR.

Quid sum miser tunc dicturus?
Quem patronum rogaturus?
Cum vix justus sit securus.

EVIL SPIRIT.

From thee the glorified *avert their view*,
The pure *forbear* to offer thee a hand.

THE CHOIR.

Quid sum miser tunc dicturus?

MARGARET.

Neighbour, your——

—Your what?—Angels and ministers of grace defend us!—'*Your Drambottle.*' Will Mr. Taylor have us understand, then, that 'the noble German nation,' more especially the fairer half thereof (for the 'Neighbour' is *Nachbarin*, Neighbour*ess*), goes to church with a decanter of brandy in its pocket? Or would he not rather, even

forcibly, interpret *Fläschchen* by *vinaigrette*, by *volatile-salts?*—The world has no notice that this passage is a borrowed one, but will, notwithstanding, as the more charitable theory, hope and believe so.

We have now done with Mr. Taylor; and would fain, after all that has come and gone, part with him in good nature and good will. He has spoken freely; we have answered freely. Far as we differ from him in regard to German Literature, and to the much more important subjects here connected with it; deeply as we feel convinced that his convictions are wrong and dangerous, are but half true, and, if taken for the whole truth, wholly false and fatal, we have nowise blinded ourselves to his vigorous talent, to his varied learning, his sincerity, his manful independence and self-support. Neither is it for speaking out plainly that we blame him. A man's honest, earnest opinion is the most precious of all he possesses: let him communicate this, if he is to communicate anything. There is, doubtless, a time to speak, and a time to keep silence; yet Fontenelle's celebrated aphorism, *I might have my hand full of truth, and would open only my little finger*, may be practised also to excess, and the little finger itself kept closed. That reserve and knowing silence, long so universal among us, is less the fruit of active benevolence, of philosophic tolerance, than of indifference and weak conviction. Honest Scepticism, honest Atheism, is better than that withered lifeless Diletanttism and amateur Eclecticism, which merely toys with all opinions; or than that wicked Macchiavellism, which in thought denying everything, except that Power is Power, in words, for its own wise purposes, loudly believes everything: of both which miserable habitudes the day, even in England, is wellnigh over. That Mr. Taylor belongs not, and at no time belonged, to either of these classes, we account a true praise. Of his *Historic Survey* we have endeavoured to point out the faults and the merits: should he reach a second edition, which we hope, perhaps he may profit by some of our hints, and render the work less unworthy of himself and of his subject. In its present state and shape, this English Temple of Fame can content no one. A huge, anomalous, heterogeneous mass, no section of it like another, oriel-window alternating with rabbit-hole, wrought capital on pillar of dried mud; heaped together out of marble, loose earth, rude boulder-stone; hastily roofed-in with shingles: such is the Temple of Fame; uninhabitable either for priest or statue, and which nothing but a continued suspension of the laws of gravity can keep

from rushing ere long into a chaos of stone and dust. For the English worshipper, who in the mean while has no other temple, we search out the least dangerous apartments; for the future builder, the materials that will be valuable.

And now, in washing our hands of this all-too sordid but not unnecessary task, one word on a more momentous object. Does not the existence of such a Book, do not many other indications, traceable in France, in Germany, as well as here, betoken that a new era in the spiritual intercourse of Europe is approaching; that instead of isolated, mutually repulsive National Literatures, a World Literature may one day be looked for? The better minds of all countries begin to understand each other; and, which follows naturally, to love each other, and help each other; by whom ultimately all countries in all their proceedings are governed.

Late in man's history, yet clearly at length, it becomes manifest to the dullest, that mind is stronger than matter, that mind is the creator and shaper of matter; that not brute Force, but only Persuasion and Faith is the king of this world. The true Poet, who is but the inspired Thinker, is still an Orpheus whose Lyre tames the savage beasts, and evokes the dead rocks to fashion themselves into palaces and stately inhabited cities. It has been said, and may be repeated, that Literature is fast becoming all in all to us; our Church, our Senate, our whole Social Constitution. The true Pope of Christendom is not that feeble old man in Rome; nor is its Autocrat the Napoleon, the Nicholas, with his half-million even of obedient bayonets: such Autocrat is himself but a more cunningly-devised bayonet and military engine in the hands of a mightier than he. The true Autocrat and Pope is that man, the real or seeming Wisest of the past age; crowned after death; who finds his Hierarchy of gifted Authors, his Clergy of assiduous Journalists; whose Decretals, written not on parchment, but on the living souls of men, it were an inversion of the laws of Nature to *dis*obey. In these times of ours, all Intellect has fused itself into Literature: Literature, Printed Thought, is the molten sea and wonder-bearing chaos, into which mind after mind casts forth its opinion, its feeling, to be molten into the general mass, and to work there; Interest after Interest is engulfed in it. or embarked on it: higher, higher it rises round all the Edifices of Existence; they must all be molten into it, and anew bodied forth from it, or stand unconsumed among its fiery surges. Woe to him whose

Edifice is not built of true Asbest, and on the everlasting Rock; but on the false sand, and of the drift-wood of Accident, and the paper and parchment of antiquated Habit! For the power, or powers, exist not on our Earth, that can say to that sea, Roll back, or bid its proud waves be still.

What form so omnipotent an element will assume; how long it will welter to and fro as a wild Democracy, a wild Anarchy; what Constitution and Organisation it will fashion for itself, and for what depends on it, in the depths of Time, is a subject for prophetic conjecture, wherein brightest hope is not unmingled with fearful apprehension and awe at the boundless unknown. The more cheering is this one thing which we do see and know: That its tendency is to a universal European Commonweal; that the wisest in all nations will communicate and coöperate; whereby Europe will again have its true Sacred College, and Council of Amphictyons; wars will become rarer, less inhuman, and in the course of centuries such delirious ferocity in nations, as in individuals it already is, may be proscribed, and become obsolete for ever.

CHARACTERISTICS.

CHARACTERISTICS.[1]

[1831.]

THE healthy know not of their health, but only the sick: this is the Physician's Aphorism; and applicable in a far wider sense than he gives it. We may say, it holds no less in moral, intellectual, political, poetical, than in merely corporeal therapeutics; that wherever, or in what shape soever, powers of the sort which can be named *vital* are at work, herein lies the test of their working right or working wrong.

In the Body, for example, as all doctors are agreed, the first condition of complete health is, that each organ perform its function unconsciously, unheeded; let but any organ announce its separate existence, were it even boastfully, and for pleasure, not for pain, then already has one of those unfortunate 'false centres of sensibility' established itself, already is derangement there. The perfection of bodily wellbeing is, that the collective bodily activities seem one; and be manifested, moreover, not in themselves, but in the action they accomplish. If a Dr. Kitchiner boast that his system is in high order, Dietetic Philosophy may indeed take credit; but the true Peptician was that Countryman who answered that, "for his part, he had no system." In fact, unity, agreement is always silent, or soft-voiced; it is only discord that loudly proclaims itself. So long as the several elements of Life, all fitly

[1] EDINBURGH REVIEW, No. 108.—1. *An Essay on the Origin and Prospects of Man.* By Thomas Hope. 3 vols. 8vo. London, 1831.

2. *Philosophische Vorlesungen, insbesondere über Philosophie der Sprache und des Wortes. Geschrieben und vorgetragen zu Dresden im December* 1828, *und in den ersten Tagen des Januars* 1829 (Philosophical Lectures, especially on the Philosophy of Language and the Gift of Speech. Written and delivered at Dresden in December 1828, and the early days of January 1829). By Friedrich von Schlegel. 8vo. Vienna, 1830.

adjusted, can pour forth their movement like harmonious tuned strings, it is a melody and unison; Life, from its mysterious fountains, flows out as in celestial music and diapason,—which also, like that other music of the spheres, even because it is perennial and complete, without interruption and without imperfection, might be fabled to escape the ear. Thus too, in some languages, is the state of health well denoted by a term expressing unity; when we feel ourselves as we wish to be, we say that we are *whole*.

Few mortals, it is to be feared, are permanently blessed with that felicity of 'having no system;' nevertheless, most of us, looking back on young years, may remember seasons of a light, aërial translucency and elasticity and perfect freedom; the body had not yet become the prison-house of the soul, but was its vehicle and implement, like a creature of the thought, and altogether pliant to its bidding. We knew not that we had limbs, we only lifted, hurled and leapt; through eye and ear, and all avenues of sense, came clear unimpeded tidings from without, and from within issued clear victorious force; we stood as in the centre of Nature, giving and receiving, in harmony with it all; unlike Virgil's Husbandmen, 'too happy *because* we did not know our blessedness.' In those days, health and sickness were foreign traditions that did not concern us; our whole being was as yet One, the whole man like an incorporated Will. Such, were Rest or ever-successful Labour the human lot, might our life continue to be: a pure, perpetual, unregarded music; a beam of perfect white light, rendering all things visible, but itself unseen, even because it was of that perfect whiteness, and no irregular obstruction had yet broken it into colours. The beginning of Inquiry is Disease: all Science, if we consider well, as it must have originated in the feeling of something being wrong, so it is and continues to be but Division, Dismemberment, and partial healing of the wrong. Thus, as was of old written, the Tree of Knowledge springs from a root of evil, and bears fruits of good and evil. Had Adam remained in Paradise, there had been no Anatomy and no Metaphysics.

But, alas, as the Philosopher declares, 'Life itself is a disease; a working incited by suffering;' action from passion! The memory of that first state of Freedom and paradisaic Unconsciousness has faded away into an ideal poetic dream. We stand here too conscious of many things: with Knowledge, the symptom of Derangement, we must even do our best to restore a little Order. Life is, in few instances, and at rare intervals, the diapason of

a heavenly melody; oftenest the fierce jar of disruptions and convulsions, which, do what we will, there is no disregarding. Nevertheless, such is still the wish of Nature on our behalf; in all vital action, her manifest purpose and effort is, that we should be unconscious of it, and, like the peptic Countryman, never know that we 'have a system.' For, indeed, vital action everywhere is emphatically a means, not an end; Life is not given us for the mere sake of Living, but always with an ulterior external Aim: neither is it on the process, on the means, but rather on the result, that Nature, in any of her doings, is wont to intrust us with insight and volition. Boundless as is the domain of man, it is but a small fractional proportion of it that he rules with Consciousness and by Forethought: what he can contrive, nay what he can altogether know and comprehend, is essentially the mechanical, small; the great is ever, in one sense or other, the vital; it is essentially the mysterious, and only the surface of it can be understood. But Nature, it might seem, strives, like a kind mother, to hide from us even this, that she is a mystery: she will have us rest on her beautiful and awful bosom as if it were our secure home; on the bottomless boundless Deep, whereon all human things fearfully and wonderfully swim, she will have us walk and build, as if the film which supported us there (which any scratch of a bare bodkin will rend asunder, any sputter of a pistol-shot instantaneously burn up) were no film, but a solid rock-foundation. Forever in the neighbourhood of an inevitable Death, man can forget that he is born to die; of his Life, which, strictly meditated, contains in it an Immensity and an Eternity, he can conceive lightly, as of a simple implement wherewith to do day-labour and earn wages. So cunningly does Nature, the mother of all highest Art, which only apes her from afar, 'body forth the Finite from the Infinite;' and guide man safe on his wondrous path, not more by endowing him with vision, than, at the right place, with blindness! Under all her works, chiefly under her noblest work, Life, lies a basis of Darkness, which she benignantly conceals; in Life too, the roots and inward circulations which stretch down fearfully to the regions of Death and Night, shall not hint of their existence, and only the fair stem with its leaves and flowers, shone on by the fair sun, shall disclose itself, and joyfully grow.

However, without venturing into the abstruse, or too eagerly asking Why and How, in things where our answer must needs prove, in great part, an echo of the question, let us be content to

remark farther, in the merely historical way, how that Aphorism of the bodily Physician holds good in quite other departments. Of the Soul, with her activities, we shall find it no less true than of the Body: nay, cry the Spiritualists, is not that very division of the unity, Man, into a dualism of Soul and Body, itself the symptom of disease; as, perhaps, your frightful theory of Materialism, of his being but a Body, and therefore, at least, once more a unity, may be the paroxysm which was critical, and the beginning of cure! But omitting this, we observe, with confidence enough, that the truly strong mind, view it as Intellect, as Morality, or under any other aspect, is nowise the mind acquainted with its strength; that here as before the sign of health is Unconsciousness. In our inward, as in our outward world, what is mechanical lies open to us: not what is dynamical and has vitality. Of our Thinking, we might say, it is but the mere upper surface that we shape into articulate Thoughts;—underneath the region of argument and conscious discourse, lies the region of meditation; here, in its quiet mysterious depths, dwells what vital force is in us; here, if aught is to be created, and not merely manufactured and communicated, must the work go on. Manufacture is intelligible, but trivial; Creation is great, and cannot be understood. Thus if the Debater and Demonstrator, whom we may rank as the lowest of true thinkers, knows what he has done, and how he did it, the Artist, whom we rank as the highest, knows not; must speak of Inspiration, and in one or the other dialect, call his work the gift of a divinity.

But on the whole, 'genius is ever a secret to itself;' of this old truth we have, on all sides, daily evidence. The Shakspeare takes no airs for writing *Hamlet* and the *Tempest*, understands not that it is anything surprising: Milton, again, is more conscious of his faculty, which accordingly is an inferior one. On the other hand, what cackling and strutting must we not often hear and see, when, in some shape of academical prolusion, maiden speech, review article, this or the other well-fledged goose has produced its goose-egg, of quite measurable value, were it the pink of its whole kind; and wonders why all mortals do not wonder!

Foolish enough, too, was the College Tutor's surprise at Walter Shandy: how, though unread in Aristotle, he could nevertheless argue; and not knowing the name of any dialectic tool, handled them all to perfection. Is it the skilfulest anatomist that cuts the best figure at Sadler's Wells? or does the boxer hit better for knowing that he has a *flexor longus* and a *flexor brevis*? But

indeed, as in the higher case of the Poet, so here in that of the Speaker and Inquirer, the true force is an unconscious one. The healthy Understanding, we should say, is not the Logical, argumentative, but the Intuitive; for the end of Understanding is not to prove and find reasons, but to know and believe. Of logic, and its limits, and uses and abuses, there were much to be said and examined; one fact, however, which chiefly concerns us here, has long been familiar: that the man of logic and the man of insight; the Reasoner and the Discoverer, or even Knower, are quite separable,—indeed, for most part, quite separate characters. In practical matters, for example, has it not become almost proverbial that the man of logic cannot prosper? This is he whom business-people call Systematic and Theoriser and Word-monger; his *vital* intellectual force lies dormant or extinct, his whole force is mechanical, conscious: of such a one it is foreseen that, when once confronted with the infinite complexities of the real world, his little compact theorem of the world will be found wanting; that unless he can throw it overboard and become a new creature, he will necessarily founder. Nay, in mere Speculation itself, the most ineffectual of all characters, generally speaking, is your dialectic man-at-arms; were he armed cap-a-pie in syllogistic mail of proof, and perfect master of logic-fence, how little does it avail him! Consider the old Schoolmen, and their pilgrimage towards Truth: the faithfulest endeavour, incessant unwearied motion, often great natural vigour; only no progress: nothing but antic feats of one limb poised against the other; there they balanced, somersetted, and made postures; at best gyrated swiftly, with some pleasure, like Spinning Dervishes, and ended where they began. So is it, so will it always be, with all System-makers and builders of logical card-castles; of which class a certain remnant must, in every age, as they do in our own, survive and build. Logic is good, but it is not the best. The Irrefragable Doctor, with his chains of induction, his corollaries, dilemmas and other cunning logical diagrams and apparatus, will cast you a beautiful horoscope, and speak reasonable things; nevertheless your stolen jewel, which you wanted him to find you, is not forthcoming. Often by some winged word, winged as the thunderbolt is, of a Luther, a Napoleon, a Goethe, shall we see the difficulty split asunder, and its secret laid bare; while the Irrefragable, with all his logical tools, hews at it, and hovers round it, and finds it on all hands too hard for him.

Again, in the difference between Oratory and Rhetoric, as indeed everywhere in that superiority of what is called the Natural over the Artificial, we find a similar illustration. The Orator persuades and carries all with him, he knows not how; the Rhetorician can prove that he ought to have persuaded and carried all with him: the one is in a state of healthy unconsciousness, as if he 'had no system;' the other, in virtue of regimen and dietetic punctuality, feels at best that 'his system is in high order.' So stands it, in short, with all the forms of Intellect, whether as directed to the finding of truth, or to the fit imparting thereof; to Poetry, to Eloquence, to depth of Insight, which is the basis of both these; always the characteristic of right performance is a certain spontaneity, an unconsciousness; 'the healthy know not of their health, but only the sick.' So that the old precept of the critic, as crabbed as it looked to his ambitious disciple, might contain in it a most fundamental truth, applicable to us all, and in much else than Literature: "Whenever you have written any sentence that looks particularly excellent, be sure to blot it out." In like manner, under milder phraseology, and with a meaning purposely much wider, a living Thinker has taught us: 'Of the Wrong we are always conscious, of the Right never.'

But if such is the law with regard to Speculation and the Intellectual power of man, much more is it with regard to Conduct, and the power, manifested chiefly therein, which we name Moral. 'Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:' whisper not to thy own heart, How worthy is this action!—for then it is already becoming worthless. The good man is he who *works* continually in welldoing; to whom welldoing is as his natural existence, awakening no astonishment, requiring no commentary; but there, like a thing of course, and as if it could not but be so. Self-contemplation, on the other hand, is infallibly the symptom of disease, be it or be it not the sign of cure. An unhealthy Virtue is one that consumes itself to leanness in repenting and anxiety; or, still worse, that inflates itself into dropsical boastfulness and vainglory: either way, there is a self-seeking; an unprofitable looking behind us to measure the way we have made: whereas the sole concern is to walk continually forward, and make more way. If in any sphere of man's life, then in the Moral sphere, as the inmost and most vital of all, it is good that there be wholeness; that there be unconsciousness, which is the evidence of this. Let the free, reasonable Will, which dwells in

us, as in our Holy of Holies, be indeed free, and obeyed like a Divinity, as is its right and its effort: the perfect obedience will be the silent one. Such perhaps were the sense of that maxim, enunciating, as is usual, but the half of a truth: To say that we have a clear conscience, is to utter a solecism; had we never sinned, we should have had no conscience. Were defeat unknown, neither would victory be celebrated by songs of triumph.

This, true enough, is an ideal, impossible state of being; yet ever the goal towards which our actual state of being strives; which it is the more perfect the nearer it can approach. Nor, in our actual world, where Labour must often prove *in*effectual, and thus in all senses Light alternate with Darkness, and the nature of an deal Morality be much modified, is the case, thus far, materially different. It is a fact which escapes no one, that, generally speaking, whoso is acquainted with his worth has but a little stock to cultivate acquaintance with. Above all, the public acknowledgment of such acquaintance, indicating that it has reached quite an intimate footing, bodes ill. Already, to the popular judgment, he who talks much about Virtue in the abstract, begins to be suspect; it is shrewdly guessed that where there is great preaching, there will be little almsgiving. Or again, on a wider scale, we can remark that ages of Heroism are not ages of Moral Philosophy; Virtue, when it can be philosophised of, has become aware of itself, is sickly and beginning to decline. A spontaneous habitual all-pervading spirit of Chivalrous Valour shrinks together, and perks itself up into shrivelled Points of Honour; humane Courtesy and Nobleness of mind dwindle into punctilious Politeness, 'avoiding meats;' 'paying tithe of mint 'and anise, neglecting the weightier matters of the law.' Goodness, which was a rule to itself, must now appeal to Precept, and seek strength from Sanctions; the Freewill no longer reigns unquestioned and by divine right, but like a mere earthly sovereign, by expediency, by Rewards and Punishments: or rather, let us say, the Freewill, so far as may be, has abdicated and withdrawn into the dark, and a spectral nightmare of a Necessity usurps its throne; for now that mysterious Self-impulse of the whole man, heaven-inspired, and in all senses partaking of the Infinite, being captiously questioned in a finite dialect, and answering, as it needs must, by silence,—is conceived as non-extant, and only the outward Mechanism of it remains acknowledged: of Volition, except

as the synonym of Desire, we hear nothing; of 'Motives,' without any Mover, more than enough.

So too, when the generous Affections have become wellnigh paralytic, we have the reign of Sentimentality. The greatness, the profitableness, at any rate the extremely ornamental nature of high feeling, and the luxury of doing good; charity, love, self-forgetfulness, devotedness and all manner of godlike magnanimity, —are everywhere insisted on, and pressingly inculcated in speech and writing, in prose and verse; Socinian Preachers proclaim 'Benevolence' to all the four winds, and have TRUTH engraved on their watch-seals: unhappily with little or no effect. Were the limbs in right walking order, why so much demonstrating of motion? The barrenest of all mortals is the Sentimentalist. Granting even that he were sincere, and did not wilfully deceive us, or without first deceiving himself, what good is in him? Does he not lie there as a perpetual lesson of despair, and type of bedrid valetudinarian impotence? His is emphatically a Virtue that has become, through every fibre, conscious of itself; it is all sick, and feels as if it were made of glass, and durst not touch or be touched; in the shape of work, it can do nothing; at the utmost, by incessant nursing and caudling, keep itself alive. As the last stage of all, when Virtue, properly so called, has ceased to be practised, and become extinct, and a mere remembrance, we have the era of Sophists, descanting of its existence, proving it, denying it, mechanically 'accounting' for it;—as dissectors and demonstrators cannot operate till once the body be dead.

Thus is true Moral genius, like true Intellectual, which indeed is but a lower phasis thereof, 'ever a secret to itself.' The healthy moral nature loves Goodness, and without wonder wholly lives in it: the unhealthy makes love to it, and would fain get to live in it; or, finding such courtship fruitless, turns round, and not without contempt abandons it. These curious relations of the Voluntary and Conscious to the Involuntary and Unconscious, and the small proportion which, in all departments of our life, the former bears to the latter,—might lead us into deep questions of Psychology and Physiology: such, however, belong not to our present object. Enough, if the fact itself become apparent, that Nature so meant it with us; that in this wise we are made. We may now say, that view man's individual Existence under what aspect we will, under the highest spiritual, as under the merely animal aspect, everywhere the grand vital energy, while in its sound state,

is an unseen unconscious one; or, in the words of our old Aphorism, 'the healthy know not of their health, but only the sick.'

To understand man, however, we must look beyond the individual man and his actions or interests, and view him in combination with his fellows. It is in Society that man first feels what he is; first becomes what he can be. In Society an altogether new set of spiritual activities are evolved in him, and the old immeasurably quickened and strengthened. Society is the genial element wherein his nature first lives and grows; the solitary man were but a small portion of himself, and must continue forever folded in, stunted and only half alive. 'Already,' says a deep Thinker, with more meaning than will disclose itself at once, 'my 'opinion, my conviction, gains *infinitely* in strength and sureness, 'the moment a second mind has adopted it.' Such, even in its simplest form, is association; so wondrous the communion of soul with soul as directed to the mere act of Knowing! In other higher acts, the wonder is still more manifest; as in that portion of our being which we name the Moral: for properly, indeed, all communion is of a moral sort, whereof such intellectual communion (in the act of knowing) is itself an example. But with regard to Morals strictly so called, it is in Society, we might almost say, that Morality begins; here at least it takes an altogether new form, and on every side, as in living growth, expands itself. The Duties of Man to himself, to what is Highest in himself, make but the First Table of the Law: to the First Table is now superadded a Second, with the Duties of Man to his Neighbour; whereby also the significance of the First now assumes its true importance. Man has joined himself with man; soul acts and reacts on soul; a mystic miraculous unfathomable Union establishes itself; Life, in all its elements, has become intensated, consecrated. The lightning-spark of Thought, generated, or say rather heaven-kindled, in the solitary mind, awakens its express likeness in another mind, in a thousand other minds, and all blaze-up together in combined fire; reverberated from mind to mind, fed also with fresh fuel in each, it acquires incalculable new light as Thought, incalculable new heat as converted into Action. By and by, a common store of Thought can accumulate, and be transmitted as an everlasting possession: Literature, whether as preserved in the memory of Bards, in Runes and Hieroglyphs engraved on stone,

or in Books of written or printed paper, comes into existence, and begins to play its wondrous part. Polities are formed; the weak submitting to the strong; with a willing loyalty, giving obedience that he may receive guidance: or say rather, in honour of our nature, the ignorant submitting to the wise; for so it is in all even the rudest communities, man never yields himself wholly to brute Force, but always to moral Greatness; thus the universal title of respect, from the Oriental *Sheik*, from the *Sachem* of the Red Indians, down to our English *Sir*, implies only that he whom we mean to honour is our *senior*. Last, as the crown and all-supporting keystone of the fabric, Religion arises. The devout meditation of the isolated man, which flitted through his soul, like a transient tone of Love and Awe from unknown lands, acquires certainty, continuance, when it is shared-in by his brother men. 'Where two or three are gathered together' in the name of the Highest, then first does the Highest, as it is written, 'appear among them to bless them;' then first does an Altar and act of united Worship open a way from Earth to Heaven; whereon, were it but a simple Jacob's-ladder, the heavenly Messengers will travel, with glad tidings and unspeakable gifts for men. Such is SOCIETY, the vital articulation of many individuals into a new collective individual: greatly the most important of man's attainments on this earth; that in which, and by virtue of which, all his other attainments and attempts find their arena, and have their value. Considered well, Society is the standing wonder of our existence; a true region of the Supernatural; as it were, a second all-embracing Life, wherein our first individual Life becomes doubly and trebly alive, and whatever of Infinitude was in us bodies itself forth, and becomes visible and active.

To figure Society as endowed with life is scarcely a metaphor; but rather the statement of a fact by such imperfect methods as language affords. Look at it closely, that mystic Union, Nature's highest work with man, wherein man's volition plays an indispensable yet so subordinate a part, and the small Mechanical grows so mysteriously and indissolubly out of the infinite Dynamical, like Body out of Spirit,—is truly enough vital, what we can call vital, and bears the distinguishing character of life. In the same style also, we can say that Society has its periods of sickness and vigour, of youth, manhood, decrepitude, dissolution and new birth; in one or other of which stages we may, in all times, and all places where men inhabit, discern it; and do ourselves, in this time and place,

whether as coöperating or as contending, as healthy members or as diseased ones, to our joy and sorrow, form part of it. The question, What is the actual condition of Society? has in these days unhappily become important enough. No one of us is unconcerned in that question; but for the majority of thinking men a true answer to it, such is the state of matters, appears almost as the one thing needful. Meanwhile, as the true answer, that is to say, the complete and fundamental answer and settlement, often as it has been demanded, is nowhere forthcoming, and indeed by its nature is impossible, any honest approximation towards such is not without value. The feeblest light, or even so much as a more precise recognition of the darkness, which is the first step to attainment of light, will be welcome.

This ~~once understood,~~ let it not seem idle if we remark that here too our old Aphorism holds; that again in the Body Politic, as in the animal body, the sign of right performance is Unconsciousness. Such indeed is virtually the meaning of that phrase, 'artificial state of society,' as contrasted with the natural state, and indicating something so inferior to it. For, in all vital things, men distinguish an Artificial and a Natural; founding on some dim perception or sentiment of the very truth we here insist on: the artificial is the conscious, mechanical; the natural is the unconscious, dynamical. Thus, as we have an artificial Poetry, and prize only the natural; so likewise we have an artificial Morality, an artificial Wisdom, an artificial Society. The artificial Society is precisely one that knows its own structure, its own internal functions; not in watching, not in knowing which, but in working outwardly to the fulfilment of its aim, does the wellbeing of a Society consist. Every Society, every Polity, has a spiritual principle; is the embodiment, tentative and more or less complete, of an Idea: all its tendencies of endeavour, specialties of custom, its laws, politics and whole procedure (as the glance of some Montesquieu, across innumerable superficial entanglements, can partly decipher), are prescribed by an Idea, and flow naturally from it, as movements from the living source of motion. This Idea, be it of devotion to a man or class of men, to a creed, to an institution, or even, as in more ancient times, to a piece of land, is ever a true Loyalty; has in it something of a religious, paramount, quite infinite character; it is properly the Soul of the State, its Life; mysterious as other forms of Life, and like these working secretly, and in a depth beyond that of consciousness.

Accordingly, it is not in the vigorous ages of a Roman Republic that Treatises of the Commonwealth are written: while the Decii are rushing with devoted bodies on the enemies of Rome, what need of preaching Patriotism? The virtue of Patriotism has already sunk from its pristine all-transcendent condition, before it has received a name. So long as the Commonwealth continues rightly athletic, it cares not to dabble in anatomy. Why teach obedience to the Sovereign; why so much as admire it, or separately recognise it, while a divine idea of Obedience perennially inspires all men? Loyalty, like Patriotism, of which it is a form, was not praised till it had begun to decline; the *Preux Chevaliers* first became rightly admirable, when 'dying for their king' had ceased to be a habit with chevaliers. For if the mystic significance of the State, let this be what it may, dwells vitally in every heart, encircles every life as with a second higher life, how should it stand self-questioning? It must rush outward, and express itself by works. Besides, if perfect, it is there as by necessity, and does not excite inquiry: it is also by nature infinite, has no limits; therefore can be circumscribed by no conditions and definitions; cannot be reasoned of; except *musically*, or in the language of Poetry, cannot yet so much as be spoken of.

In those days, Society was what we name healthy, sound at heart. Not indeed without suffering enough; not without perplexities, difficulty on every side: for such is the appointment of man; his highest and sole blessedness is, that he toil, and know what to toil at: not in ease, but in united victorious labour, which is at once evil and the victory over evil, does his Freedom lie. Nay often, looking no deeper than such superficial perplexities of the early Time, historians have taught us that it was all one mass of contradiction and disease; and in the antique Republic or feudal Monarchy have seen only the confused chaotic quarry, not the robust labourer, or the stately edifice he was building of it.

If Society, in such ages, had its difficulty, it had also its strength; if sorrowful masses of rubbish so encumbered it, the tough sinews to hurl them aside, with indomitable heart, were not wanting. Society went along without complaint; did not stop to scrutinise itself, to say, How well I perform! or, Alas, how ill! Men did not yet feel themselves to be 'the envy of surrounding nations;' and were enviable on that very account. Society was what we can call *whole*, in both senses of the word. The individual man was in himself a whole, or complete union; and could combine with his

fellows as the living member of a greater whole. For all men, through their life, were animated by one great Idea; thus all efforts pointed one way, everywhere there was *wholeness*. Opinion and Action had not yet become disunited; but the former could still produce the latter, or attempt to produce it; as the stamp does its impression while the wax is not hardened. Thought and the voice of thought were also a unison; thus, instead of Speculation, we had Poetry; Literature, in its rude utterance, was as yet a heroic Song, perhaps too a devotional Anthem.

Religion was everywhere; Philosophy lay hid under it, peaceably included in it. Herein, as in the life-centre of all, lay the true health and oneness. Only at a later era must Religion split itself into Philosophies; and thereby, the vital union of Thought being lost, disunion and mutual collision in all provinces of Speech and Action more and more prevail. For if the Poet or Priest, or by whatever title the inspired thinker may be named, is the sign of vigour and well-being; so likewise is the Logician, or uninspired thinker, the sign of disease, probably of decrepitude and decay. Thus, not to mention other instances, one of them much nearer hand,—so soon as Prophecy among the Hebrews had ceased, then did the reign of Argumentation begin; and the ancient Theocracy, in its Sadduceeisms and Phariseeisms, and vain jangling of sects and doctors, give token that the *soul* of it had fled, and that the *body* itself, by natural dissolution, 'with the old forces still at work, but working in reverse order,' was on the road to final disappearance.

We might pursue this question into innumerable other ramifications; and everywhere, under new shapes, find the same truth, which we here so imperfectly enunciate, disclosed; that throughout the whole world of man, in all manifestations and performances of his nature, outward and inward, personal and social, the Perfect, the Great is a mystery to itself, knows not itself; whatsoever does know itself is already little, and more or less imperfect. Or otherwise, we may say, Unconsciousness belongs to pure unmixed life; Consciousness to a diseased mixture and conflict of life and death: Unconsciousness is the sign of creation; Consciousness, at best, that of manufacture. So deep, in this existence of ours, is the significance of Mystery. Well might the Ancients make Silence a god; for it is the element of all godhood, infinitude, or transcendental greatness; at once the source and the ocean wherein all such begins and ends. In the same sense, too, have Poets sung

'Hymns to the Night;' as if Night were nobler than Day; as if Day were but a small motley-coloured veil spread transiently over the infinite bosom of Night, and did but deform and hide from us its purely transparent eternal deeps. So likewise have they spoken and sung as if Silence were the grand epitome and complete sum-total of all Harmony; and Death, what mortals call Death, properly the beginning of Life. Under such figures, since except in figures there is no speaking of the Invisible, have men endeavoured to express a great Truth;—a Truth, in our Times, as nearly as is perhaps possible, forgotten by the most; which nevertheless continues forever true, forever all-important, and will one day, under new figures, be again brought home to the bosoms of all.

But indeed, in a far lower sense, the rudest mind has still some intimation of the greatness there is in Mystery. If Silence was made a god of by the Ancients, he still continues a government-clerk among us Moderns. To all quacks, moreover, of what sort soever, the effect of Mystery is well known: here and there some Cagliostro, even in latter days, turns it to notable account: the blockhead also, who is ambitious, and has no talent, finds sometimes in 'the talent of silence,' a kind of succedaneum. Or again, looking on the opposite side of the matter, do we not see, in the common understanding of mankind, a certain distrust, a certain contempt of what is altogether self-conscious and mechanical? As nothing that is wholly seen through has other than a trivial character; so anything professing to be great, and yet wholly to see through itself, is already known to be false, and a failure. The evil repute your 'theoretical men' stand in, the acknowledged inefficiency of 'paper constitutions,' and all that class of objects, are instances of this. Experience often repeated, and perhaps a certain instinct of something far deeper that lies under such experiences, has taught men so much. They know beforehand, that the loud is generally the insignificant, the empty. Whatsoever can proclaim itself from the house-tops may be fit for the hawker, and for those multitudes that must needs buy of him; but for any deeper use, might as well continue unproclaimed. Observe too, how the converse of the proposition holds; how the insignificant, the empty, is usually the loud; and, after the manner of a drum, is loud even because of its emptiness. The uses of some Patent Dinner Calefactor can be bruited abroad over the whole world in the course of the first winter; those of the Printing Press are not so well seen into for the first three centuries: the passing of the

Select-Vestries Bill raises more noise and hopeful expectancy among mankind than did the promulgation of the Christian Religion. Again, and again, we say, the great, the creative and enduring is ever a secret to itself; only the small, the barren and transient is otherwise.

If we now, with a practical medical view, examine, by this same test of Unconsciousness, the Condition of our own Era, and of man's Life therein, the diagnosis we arrive at is nowise of a flattering sort. The state of Society in our days is, of all possible states, the least an unconscious one: this is specially the Era when all manner of Inquiries into what was once the unfelt, involuntary sphere of man's existence, find their place, and, as it were, occupy the whole domain of thought. What, for example, is all this that we hear, for the last generation or two, about the Improvement of the Age, the Spirit of the Age, Destruction of Prejudice, Progress of the Species, and the March of Intellect, but an unhealthy state of self-sentience, self-survey; the precursor and prognostic of still worse health? That Intellect do march, if possible at double-quick time, is very desirable; nevertheless, why should she turn round at every stride, and cry: See you what a stride I have taken! Such a marching of Intellect is distinctly of the spavined kind; what the Jockeys call 'all action and no go.' Or at best, if we examine well, it is the marching of that gouty Patient, whom his Doctors had clapt on a metal floor artificially heated to the searing point, so that he was obliged to march, and did march with a vengeance—nowhither. Intellect did not awaken for the first time yesterday; but has been under way from Noah's Flood downwards: greatly her best progress, moreover, was in the old times, when she said nothing about it. In those same 'dark ages,' Intellect (metaphorically as well as literally) could invent *glass*, which now she has enough ado to grind into *spectacles*. Intellect built not only Churches, but a Church, *the* Church, based on this firm Earth, yet reaching up, and leading up, as high as Heaven; and now it is all she can do to keep its doors bolted, that there be no tearing of the Surplices, no robbery of the Alms-box. She built a Senate-house likewise, glorious in its kind; and now it costs her a well-nigh mortal effort to sweep it clear of vermin, and get the roof made rain-tight.

But the truth is, with Intellect, as with most other things, we are now passing from that first or boastful stage of Self-sentience

into the second or painful one: out of these often-asseverated declarations that 'our system is in high order,' we come now, by natural sequence, to the melancholy conviction that it is altogether the reverse. Thus, for instance, in the matter of Government, the period of the 'Invaluable Constitution' has to be followed by a Reform Bill; to laudatory De Lolmes succeed objurgatory Benthams. At any rate, what Treatises on the Social Contract, on the Elective Franchise, the Rights of Man, the Rights of Property, Codifications, Institutions, Constitutions, have we not, for long years, groaned under! Or again, with a wider survey, consider those Essays on Man, Thoughts on Man, Inquiries concerning Man; not to mention Evidences of the Christian Faith, Theories of Poetry, Considerations on the Origin of Evil, which during the last century have accumulated on us to a frightful extent. Never since the beginning of Time was there, that we hear or read of, so intensely self-conscious a Society. Our whole relations to the Universe and to our fellow-man have become an Inquiry, a Doubt; nothing will go on of its own accord, and do its function quietly; but all things must be probed into, the whole working of man's world be anatomically studied. Alas, anatomically studied, that it may be medically aided! Till at length indeed, we have come to such a pass, that except in this same *medicine*, with its artifices and appliances, few can so much as imagine any strength or hope to remain for us. The whole Life of Society must now be carried on by drugs: doctor after doctor appears with his nostrum, of Coöperative Societies, Universal Suffrage, Cottage-and-Cow systems, Repression of Population, Vote by Ballot. To such height has the dyspepsia of Society reached; as indeed the constant grinding internal pain, or from time to time the mad spasmodic throes, of all Society do otherwise too mournfully indicate.

Far be it from us to attribute, as some unwise persons do, the disease itself to this unhappy sensation that there is a disease! The Encyclopedists did not produce the troubles of France; but the troubles of France produced the Encyclopedists, and much else. The Self-consciousness is the symptom merely; nay, it is also the attempt towards cure. We record the fact, without special censure; not wondering that Society should feel itself, and in all ways complain of aches and twinges, for it has suffered enough. Napoleon was but a Job's-comforter, when he told his wounded Staff-officer, twice unhorsed by cannon-balls, and with half his limbs blown to pieces: "*Vous vous écoutez trop!*"

On the outward, as it were Physical diseases of Society, it were beside our purpose to insist here. These are diseases which he who runs may read; and sorrow over, with or without hope. Wealth has accumulated itself into masses; and Poverty, also in accumulation enough, lies impassably separated from it; opposed, uncommunicating, like forces in positive and negative poles. The gods of this lower world sit aloft on glittering thrones, less happy than Epicurus's gods, but as indolent, as impotent; while the boundless living chaos of Ignorance and Hunger welters terrific, in its dark fury, under their feet. How much among us might be likened to a whited sepulchre; outwardly all pomp and strength; but inwardly full of horror and despair and dead-men's bones! Iron highways, with their wains fire-winged, are uniting all ends of the firm Land; quays and moles, with their innumerable stately fleets, tame the Ocean into our pliant bearer of burdens; Labour's thousand arms, of sinew and of metal, all-conquering everywhere, from the tops of the mountain down to the depths of the mine and the caverns of the sea, ply unweariedly for the service of man: yet man remains unserved. He has subdued this Planet, his habitation and inheritance; yet reaps no profit from the victory.

Sad to look upon: in the highest stage of civilisation, nine tenths of mankind have to struggle in the lowest battle of savage or even animal man, the battle against Famine. Countries are rich, prosperous in all manner of increase, beyond example; but the Men of those countries are poor, needier than ever of all sustenance outward and inward; of Belief, of Knowledge, of Money, of Food. The rule, *Sic vos non vobis*, never altogether to be got rid of in men's Industry, now presses with such incubus weight, that Industry must shake it off, or utterly be strangled under it; and, alas, can as yet but gasp and rave, and aimlessly struggle, like one in the final deliration. Thus Change, or the inevitable approach of Change, is manifest everywhere. In one Country we have seen lava-torrents of fever-frenzy envelop all things; Government succeed Government, like the phantasms of a dying brain. In another Country, we can even now see, in maddest alternation, the Peasant governed by such guidance as this: To labour earnestly one month in raising wheat, and the next month labour earnestly in burning it. So that Society, were it not by nature immortal, and its death ever a new-birth, might appear, as it does in the eyes of some, to be sick to dissolution, and even now writhing in its last agony. Sick enough we must admit it to be,

with disease enough, a whole nosology of diseases; wherein he perhaps is happiest that is not called to prescribe as physician;—wherein, however, one small piece of policy, that of summoning the Wisest in the Commonwealth, by the sole method yet known or thought of, to come together and with their whole soul consult for it, might, but for late tedious experiences, have seemed unquestionable enough.

But leaving this, let us rather look within, into the Spiritual condition of Society, and see what aspects and prospects offer themselves there. For after all, it is there properly that the secret and origin of the whole is to be sought: the Physical derangements of Society are but the image and impress of its Spiritual; while the heart continues sound, all other sickness is superficial, and temporary False Action is the fruit of false Speculation; let the spirit of Society be free and strong, that is to say, let true Principles inspire the members of Society, then neither can disorders accumulate in its Practice; each disorder will be promptly, faithfully inquired into, and remedied as it arises. But alas, with us the Spiritual condition of Society is no less sickly than the Physical. Examine man's internal world, in any of its social relations and performances, here too all seems diseased self-consciousness, collision and mutually-destructive struggle. Nothing acts from within outwards in undivided healthy force; everything lies impotent, lamed, its force turned inwards, and painfully 'listens to itself.'

To begin with our highest Spiritual function, with Religion, we might ask, Whither has Religion now fled? Of Churches and their establishments we here say nothing; nor of the unhappy domains of Unbelief, and how innumerable men, blinded in their minds, have grown to 'live without God in the world;' but, taking the fairest side of the matter, we ask, What is the nature of that same Religion, which still lingers in the hearts of the few who are called, and call themselves, specially the Religious? Is it a healthy religion, vital, unconscious of itself; that shines forth spontaneously in doing of the Work, or even in preaching of the Word? Unhappily, no. Instead of heroic martyr Conduct, and inspired and soul-inspiring Eloquence, whereby Religion itself were brought home to our living bosoms, to live and reign there, we have 'Discourses on the Evidences,' endeavouring, with smallest result, to make it probable that such a thing as Religion exists. The most enthusiastic Evangelicals do not preach a Gospel, but keep describing how it should and might be preached: to awaken the

sacred fire of faith, as by a sacred contagion, is not their endeavour; but, at most, to describe how Faith shows and acts, and scientifically distinguish true Faith from false. Religion, like all else, is conscious of itself, listens to itself; it becomes less and less creative, vital; more and more mechanical. Considered as a whole, the Christian Religion of late ages has been continually dissipating itself into Metaphysics; and threatens now to disappear, as some rivers do, in deserts of barren sand.

Of Literature, and its deep-seated, wide-spread maladies, why speak? Literature is but a branch of Religion, and always participates in its character: however, in our time, it is the only branch that still shows any greenness; and, as some think, must one day become the main stem. Now, apart from the subterranean and tartarean regions of Literature;—leaving out of view the frightful, scandalous statistics of Puffing, the mystery of Slander, Falsehood, Hatred and other convulsion-work of rabid Imbecility, and all that has rendered Literature on that side a perfect 'Babylon the mother of Abominations,' in very deed making the world 'drunk' with the wine of her iniquity;—forgetting all this, let us look only to the regions of the upper air; to such Literature as can be said to have some attempt towards truth in it, some tone of music, and if it be not poetical, to hold of the poetical. Among other characteristics, is not this manifest enough: that it knows itself? Spontaneous devotedness to the object, being wholly possessed by the object, what we can call Inspiration, has well-nigh ceased to appear in Literature. Which melodious Singer forgets that he is singing melodiously? We have not the love of greatness, but the love of the love of greatness. Hence infinite Affectations, Distractions; in every case inevitable Error. Consider, for one example, this peculiarity of Modern Literature, the sin that has been named View-hunting. In our elder writers, there are no paintings of scenery for its own sake; no euphuistic gallantries with Nature, but a constant heartlove for her, a constant dwelling in communion with her. View-hunting, with so much else that is of kin to it, first came decisively into action through the *Sorrows of Werter;* which wonderful Performance, indeed, may in many senses be regarded as the progenitor of all that has since become popular in Literature; whereof, in so far as concerns spirit and tendency, it still offers the most instructive image; for nowhere, except in its own country, above all in the mind of its illustrious Author, has it yet fallen wholly obsolete. Scarcely ever, till that

late epoch, did any worshipper of Nature become entirely aware that he was worshipping, much to his own credit; and think of saying to himself: Come, let us make a description! Intolerable enough: when every puny whipster plucks out his pencil, and insists on painting you a scene; so that the instant you discern such a thing as 'wavy outline,' 'mirror of the lake,' 'stern headland,' or the like, in any Book, you tremulously hasten on; and scarcely the Author of Waverley himself can tempt you not to skip.

Nay, is not the diseased self-conscious state of Literature disclosed in this one fact, which lies so near us here, the prevalence of Reviewing! Sterne's wish for a reader 'that would give-up the 'reins of his imagination into his author's hands, and be pleased 'he knew not why, and cared not wherefore,' might lead him a long journey now. Indeed, for our best class of readers, the chief pleasure, a very stinted one, is this same knowing of the Why; which many a Kames and Bossu has been ineffectually enough, endeavouring to teach us: till at last these also have laid down their trade; and now your Reviewer is a mere *taster;* who tastes, and says, by the evidence of such palate, such tongue, as he has got, It is good, It is bad. Was it thus that the French carried out certain inferior creatures on their Algerine Expedition, to taste the wells for them, and try whether they were poisoned? Far be it from us to disparage our own craft, whereby we have our living! Only we must note these things: that Reviewing spreads with strange vigour; that such a man as Byron reckons the Reviewer and the Poet equal; that at the last Leipzig Fair, there was advertised a Review of Reviews. By and by it will be found that all Literature has become one boundless self-devouring Review; and, as in London routs, we have to *do* nothing, but only to *see* others do nothing.—Thus does Literature also, like a sick thing, superabundantly 'listen to itself.'

No less is this unhealthy symptom manifest, if we cast a glance on our Philosophy, on the character of our speculative Thinking. Nay already, as above hinted, the mere existence and necessity of a Philosophy is an evil. Man is sent hither not to question, but to work: 'the end of man,' it was long ago written, 'is an Action, not a Thought.' In the perfect state, all Thought were but the picture and inspiring symbol of Action; Philosophy, except as Poetry and Religion, would have no being. And yet how, in this imperfect state, can it be avoided, can it be dispensed with? Man stands as in the centre of Nature; his fraction of Time encircled

by Eternity, his handbreadth of Space encircled by Infinitude: how shall he forbear asking himself, What am I; and Whence; and Whither? How too, except in slight partial hints, in kind asseverations and assurances, such as a mother quiets her fretfully inquisitive child with, shall he get answer to such inquiries?

The disease of Metaphysics, accordingly, is a perennial one. In all ages, those questions of Death and Immortality, Origin of Evil, Freedom and Necessity, must, under new forms, anew make their appearance; ever, from time to time, must the attempt to shape for ourselves some Theorem of the Universe be repeated. And ever unsuccessfully: for what Theorem of the Infinite can the Finite render complete? We, the whole species of Mankind, and our whole existence and history, are but a floating speck in the illimitable ocean of the All; yet *in* that ocean; indissoluble portion thereof; partaking of its infinite tendencies: borne this way and that by its deep-swelling tides, and grand ocean currents; —of which what faintest chance is there that we should ever exhaust the significance, ascertain the goings and comings? A region of Doubt, therefore, hovers forever in the background; in Action alone can we have certainty. Nay properly Doubt is the indispensable inexhaustible material whereon Action works, which Action has to fashion into Certainty and Reality; only on a canvas of Darkness, such is man's way of being, could the many-coloured picture of our Life paint itself and shine.

Thus if our eldest system of Metaphysics is as old as the *Book of Genesis*, our latest is that of Mr. Thomas Hope, published only within the current year. It is a chronic malady that of Metaphysics, as we said, and perpetually recurs on us. At the utmost, there is a better and a worse in it; a stage of convalescence, and a stage of relapse with new sickness: these forever succeed each other, as is the nature of all Life-movement here below. The first, or convalescent stage, we might also name that of Dogmatical or Constructive Metaphysics; when the mind constructively endeavours to scheme out and assert for itself an actual Theorem of the Universe, and therewith for a time rests satisfied. The second or sick stage might be called that of Sceptical or Inquisitory Metaphysics; when the mind having widened its sphere of vision, the existing Theorem of the Universe no longer answers the phenomena, no longer yields contentment; but must be torn in pieces, and certainty anew sought for in the endless realms of denial. All Theologies and sacred Cosmogonies belong, in some

measure, to the first class; in all Pyrrhonism, from Pyrrho down to Hume and the innumerable disciples of Hume, we have instances enough of the second. In the former, so far as it affords satisfaction, a temporary anodyne to doubt, an arena for wholesome action, there may be much good; indeed in this case, it holds rather of Poetry than of Metaphysics, might be called Inspiration rather than Speculation. The latter is Metaphysics proper; a pure, unmixed, though from time to time a necessary evil.

For truly, if we look into it, there is no more fruitless endeavour than this same, which the Metaphysician proper toils in: to educe Conviction out of Negation. How, by merely testing and rejecting what is not, shall we ever attain knowledge of what is? Metaphysical Speculation, as it begins in No or Nothingness, so it must needs end in Nothingness; circulates and must circulate in endless vortices; creating, swallowing—itself. Our being is made up of Light and Darkness, the Light resting on the Darkness, and balancing it; everywhere there is Dualism, Equipoise; a perpetual Contradiction dwells in us: 'where shall I place myself to escape from my own shadow?' Consider it well, Metaphysics is the attempt of the mind to rise above the mind; to environ and shut in, or as we say, *comprehend* the mind. Hopeless struggle, for the wisest, as for the foolishest! What strength of sinew, or athletic skill, will enable the stoutest athlete to fold his own body in his arms, and, by lifting, lift up *himself?* The Irish Saint swam the Channel, 'carrying his head in his teeth;' but the feat has never been imitated.

That this is the age of Metaphysics, in the proper, or sceptical Inquisitory sense; that there was a necessity for its being such an age, we regard as our indubitable misfortune. From many causes, the arena of free Activity has long been narrowing, that of sceptical Inquiry becoming more and more universal, more and more perplexing. The Thought conducts not to the Deed; but in boundless chaos, self-devouring, engenders monstrosities, phantasms, fire-breathing chimeras. Profitable Speculation were this: What is to be done; and How is it to be done? But with us not so much as the What can be got sight of. For some generations, all Philosophy has been a painful, captious, hostile question towards everything in the Heaven above, and in the Earth beneath: Why art thou there? Till at length it has come to pass that the worth and authenticity of all things seems dubitable or deniable: our best effort must be unproductively spent not in working, but in ascertaining our mere Whereabout, and so much as whether we are to work at

all. Doubt, which, as was said, ever hangs in the background of our world, has now become our middleground and foreground; whereon, for the time, no fair Life-picture can be painted, but only the dark air-canvas itself flow round us, bewildering and benighting.

Nevertheless, doubt as we will, man is actually Here; not to ask questions, but to do work: in this time, as in all times, it must be the heaviest evil for him, if his faculty of Action lie dormant, and only that of sceptical Inquiry exert itself. Accordingly, whoever looks abroad upon the world, comparing the Past with the Present, may find that the practical condition of man in these days is one of the saddest; burdened with miseries which are in a considerable degree peculiar. In no time was man's life what he calls a happy one; in no time can it be so. A perpetual dream there has been of Paradises, and some luxurious Lubberland, where the brooks should run wine, and the trees bend with ready-baked viands; but it was a dream merely; an impossible dream. Suffering, contradiction, error, have their quite perennial, and even indispensable abode in this Earth. Is not labour the inheritance of man? And what labour for the present is joyous, and not grievous? Labour, effort, is the very interruption of that ease, which man foolishly enough fancies to be his happiness; and yet without labour there were no ease, no rest, so much as conceivable. Thus Evil, what we call Evil, must ever exist while man exists: Evil, in the widest sense we can give it, is precisely the dark, disordered material out of which man's Freewill has to create an edifice of order and Good. Ever must Pain urge us to Labour; and only in free Effort can any blessedness be imagined for us.

But if man has, in all ages, had enough to encounter, there has, in most civilised ages, been an inward force vouchsafed him, whereby the pressure of things outward might be withstood. Obstruction abounded; but Faith also was not wanting. It is by Faith that man removes mountains: while he had Faith, his limbs might be wearied with toiling, his back galled with bearing; but the heart within him was peaceable and resolved. In the thickest gloom there burnt a lamp to guide him. If he struggled and suffered, he felt that it even should be so; knew for what he was suffering and struggling. Faith gave him an inward Willingness; a world of Strength wherewith to front a world of Difficulty. The true wretchedness lies here: that the Difficulty remain and the Strength be lost; that Pain cannot relieve itself in free Effort; that we have the Labour, and want the Willingness. Faith

strengthens us, enlightens us, for all endeavours and endurances; with Faith we can do all, and dare all, and life itself has a thousand times been joyfully given away. But the sum of man's misery is even this, that he feel himself crushed under the Juggernaut wheels, and know that Juggernaut is no divinity, but a dead mechanical idol.

Now this is specially the misery which has fallen on man in our Era. Belief, Faith has well-nigh vanished from the world. The youth on awakening in this wondrous Universe no longer finds a competent theory of its wonders. Time was, when if he asked himself, What is man, What are the duties of man? the answer stood ready written for him. But now the ancient 'ground-plan of the All' belies itself when brought into contact with reality; Mother Church has, to the most, become a superannuated Stepmother, whose lessons go disregarded; or are spurned at, and scornfully gainsaid. For young Valour and thirst of Action no ideal Chivalry invites to heroism, prescribes what is heroic: the old ideal of Manhood has grown obsolete, and the new is still invisible to us, and we grope after it in darkness, one clutching this phantom, another that; Werterism, Byronism, even Brummelism, each has its day. For Contemplation and love of Wisdom, no Cloister now opens its religious shades; the Thinker must, in all senses, wander homeless, too often aimless, looking up to a Heaven which is dead for him, round to an Earth which is deaf. Action, in those old days, was easy, was voluntary, for the divine worth of human things lay acknowledged; Speculation was wholesome, for it ranged itself as the handmaid of Action; what could not so range itself died out by its natural death, by neglect. Loyalty still hallowed obedience, and made rule noble; there was still something to be loyal to: the Godlike stood embodied under many a symbol in men's interests and business; the Finite shadowed forth the Infinite; Eternity looked through Time. The Life of man was encompassed and overcanopied by a glory of Heaven, even as his dwelling-place by the azure vault.

How changed in these new days! Truly may it be said, the Divinity has withdrawn from the Earth; or veils himself in that wide-wasting Whirlwind of a departing Era, wherein the fewest can discern his goings. Not Godhead, but an iron, ignoble circle of Necessity embraces all things; binds the youth of these times into a sluggish thrall, or else exasperates him into a rebel. Heroic Action is paralysed; for what worth now remains unquestionable

with him? At the fervid period when his whole nature cries aloud for Action, there is nothing sacred under whose banner he can act; the course and kind and conditions of free Action are all but undiscoverable. Doubt storms-in on him through every avenue; inquiries of the deepest, painfulest sort must be engaged with; and the invincible energy of young years waste itself in sceptical, suicidal cavillings; in passionate 'questionings of Destiny,' whereto no answer will be returned.

For men, in whom the old perennial principle of Hunger (be it Hunger of the poor Day-drudge who stills it with eighteenpence a-day, or of the ambitious Placehunter who can nowise still it with so little) suffices to fill-up existence, the case is bad; but not the worst. These men have an aim, such as it is; and can steer towards it, with chagrin enough truly; yet, as their hands are kept full, without desperation. Unhappier are they to whom a higher instinct has been given; who struggle to be persons, not machines; to whom the Universe is not a warehouse, or at best a fancy-bazaar, but a mystic temple and hall of doom. For such men there lie properly two courses open. The lower, yet still an estimable class, take up with worn-out Symbols of the Godlike; keep trimming and trucking between these and Hypocrisy, purblindly enough, miserably enough. A numerous intermediate class end in Denial; and form a theory that there is no theory; that nothing is certain in the world, except this fact of Pleasure being pleasant; so they try to realise what trifling modicum of Pleasure they can come at, and to live contented therewith, winking hard. Of these we speak not here; but only of the second nobler class, who also have dared to say No, and cannot yet say Yea; but feel that in the No they dwell as in a Golgotha, where life enters not, where peace is not appointed them.

Hard, for most part, is the fate of such men; the harder the nobler they are. In dim forecastings, wrestles within them the 'Divine Idea of the World,' yet will nowhere visibly reveal itself. They have to realise a Worship for themselves, or live unworshipping. The Godlike has vanished from the world; and they, by the strong cry of their soul's agony, like true wonder-workers, must again evoke its presence. This miracle is their appointed task; which they must accomplish, or die wretchedly: this miracle has been accomplished by such; but not in our land; our land yet knows not of it. Behold a Byron, in melodious tones, 'cursing his day:' he mistakes earthborn passionate Desire for heaven-inspired

Freewill; without heavenly loadstar, rushes madly into the dance of meteoric lights that hover on the mad Mahlstrom: and goes down among its eddies. Hear a Shelley filling the earth with inarticulate wail; like the infinite, inarticulate grief and weeping of forsaken infants. A noble Friedrich Schlegel, stupefied in that fearful loneliness, as of a silenced battle-field, flies back to Catholicism; as a child might to its slain mother's bosom, and cling there. In lower regions, how many a poor Hazlitt must wander on God's verdant earth, like the Unblest on burning deserts; passionately dig wells, and draw up only the dry quicksand; believe that he is seeking Truth, yet only wrestle among endless Sophisms, doing desperate battle as with spectre-hosts; and die and make no sign!

To the better order of such minds any mad joy of Denial has long since ceased: the problem is not now to deny, but to ascertain and perform. Once in destroying the False, there was a certain inspiration; but now the genius of Destruction has done its work, there is now nothing more to destroy. The doom of the Old has long been pronounced, and irrevocable; the Old has passed away: but, alas, the New appears not in its stead; the Time is still in pangs of travail with the New. Man has walked by the light of conflagrations, and amid the sound of falling cities; and now there is darkness, and long watching till it be morning. The voice even of the faithful can but exclaim: 'As yet struggles the twelfth hour of the Night: birds of 'darkness are on the wing, spectres uproar, the dead walk, the living 'dream.—Thou, Eternal Providence, wilt cause the day to dawn!'[2]

Such being the condition, temporal and spiritual, of the world at our Epoch, can we wonder that the world 'listens to itself,' and struggles and writhes, everywhere externally and internally, like a thing in pain? Nay, is not even this unhealthy action of the world's Organisation, if the symptom of universal disease, yet also the symptom and sole means of restoration and cure? The effort of Nature, exerting her medicative force to cast-out foreign impediments, and once more become One, become whole? In Practice, still more in Opinion, which is the precursor and prototype of Practice, there must needs be collision, convulsion; much has to be ground away. Thought must needs be Doubt and Inquiry, before it can again be Affirmation and Sacred Precept. Innumerable 'Philosophies of Man,' contending in boundless hubbub, must annihilate each other, before an inspired Poesy and Faith for Man can fashion itself together.

[2] Jean Paul's *Hesperus* (Vorrede).

From this stunning hubbub, a true Babel-like confusion of tongues, we have here selected two Voices; less as objects of praise or condemnation, than as signs how far the confusion has reached, what prospect there is of its abating. Friedrich Schlegel's *Lectures* delivered at Dresden, and Mr. Hope's *Essay* published in London, are the latest utterances of European Speculation: far asunder in external place, they stand at a still wider distance in inward purport; are, indeed, so opposite and yet so cognate that they may, in many senses, represent the two Extremes of our whole modern system of Thought; and be said to include between them all the Metaphysical Philosophies, so often alluded to here, which, of late times, from France, Germany, England, have agitated and almost overwhelmed us. Both in regard to matter and to form, the relation of these two Works is significant enough.

Speaking first of their cognate qualities, let us remark, not without emotion, one quite extraneous point of agreement; the fact that the Writers of both have departed from this world; they have now finished their search, and had all doubts resolved: while we listen to the voice, the tongue that uttered it has gone silent forever. But the fundamental, all-pervading similarity lies in this circumstance, well worthy of being noted, that both these Philosophies are of the Dogmatic or Constructive sort: each in its way is a kind of Genesis; an endeavour to bring the Phenomena of man's Universe once more under some theoretic Scheme: in both there is a decided principle of unity; they strive after a result which shall be positive; their aim is not to question, but to establish. This, especially if we consider with what comprehensive concentrated force it is here exhibited, forms a new feature in such works.

Under all other aspects, there is the most irreconcilable opposition; a staring contrariety, such as might provoke contrasts, were there far fewer points of comparison. If Schlegel's Work is the apotheosis of Spiritualism; Hope's again is the apotheosis of Materialism: in the one, all Matter is evaporated into a Phenomenon, and terrestrial Life itself, with its whole doings and showings, held out as a Disturbance (*Zerrüttung*) produced by the *Zeitgeist* (Spirit of Time); in the other, Matter is distilled and sublimated into some semblance of Divinity: the one regards Space and Time as mere forms of man's mind, and without external existence or reality; the other supposes Space and Time to be 'incessantly created,' and rayed-in upon us like a sort of 'gravitation.' Such is their difference in respect of purport: no less

striking is it in respect of manner, talent, success and all outward characteristics. Thus, if in Schlegel we have to admire the power of Words, in Hope we stand astonished, it might almost be said, at the want of an articulate Language. To Schlegel his Philosophic Speech is obedient, dextrous, exact, like a promptly ministering genius; his names are so clear, so precise and vivid, that they almost (sometimes altogether) become things for him: with Hope there is no Philosophical Speech; but a painful, confused stammering, and struggling after such; or the tongue, as in doatish forgetfulness, maunders, low, long-winded, and speaks not the word intended, but another; so that here the scarcely intelligible, in these endless convolutions, becomes the wholly unreadable; and often we could ask, as that mad pupil did of his tutor in Philosophy, "But whether is Virtue a fluid, then, or a gas?" If the fact, that Schlegel, in the city of Dresden, could find audience for such high discourse, may excite our envy; this other fact, that a person of strong powers, skilled in English Thought and master of its Dialect, could write the *Origin and Prospects of Man*, may painfully remind us of the reproach, that England has now no language for Meditation; that England, the most calculative, is the least meditative, of all civilised countries.

It is not our purpose to offer any criticism of Schlegel's Book; in such limits as were possible here, we should despair of communicating even the faintest image of its significance. To the mass of readers, indeed, both among the Germans themselves, and still more elsewhere, it nowise addresses itself, and may lie forever sealed. We point it out as a remarkable document of the Time and of the Man; can recommend it, moreover, to all earnest Thinkers, as a work deserving their best regard; a work full of deep meditation, wherein the infinite mystery of Life, if not represented, is decisively recognised. Of Schlegel himself, and his character, and spiritual history, we can profess no thorough or final understanding; yet enough to make us view him with admiration and pity, nowise with harsh contemptuous censure; and must say, with clearest persuasion, that the outcry of his being 'a renegade,' and so forth, is but like other such outcries, a judgment where there was neither jury, nor evidence, nor judge. The candid reader, in this Book itself, to say nothing of all the rest, will find traces of a high, farseeing, earnest spirit, to whom 'Austrian Pensions,' and the Kaiser's crown, and Austria altogether, were but a light matter to the finding and vitally appropriating of Truth. Let us respect the sacred

mystery of a Person; rush not irreverently into man's Holy of Holies! Were the lost little one, as we said already, found 'sucking its dead mother, on the field of carnage,' could it be other than a spectacle for tears? A solemn mournful feeling comes over us when we see this last Work of Friedrich Schlegel, the unwearied seeker, end abruptly in the middle; and, as if he *had not* yet found, as if emblematically of much, end with an '*Aber*—,' with a 'But—'! This was the last word that came from the Pen of Friedrich Schlegel: about eleven at night he wrote it down, and there paused sick; at one in the morning, Time for him had merged itself in Eternity; he was, as we say, no more.

Still less can we attempt any criticism of Mr. Hope's new Book of Genesis. Indeed, under any circumstances, criticism of it were now impossible. Such an utterance could only be responded to in peals of laughter; and laughter sounds hollow and hideous through the vaults of the dead. Of this monstrous Anomaly, where all sciences are heaped and huddled together, and the principles of all are, with a childlike innocence, plied hither and thither, or wholly abolished in case of need; where the First Cause is figured as a huge Circle, with nothing to do but radiate 'gravitation' towards its centre; and so construct a Universe, wherein all, from the lowest cucumber with its coolness, up to the highest seraph with his love, were but 'gravitation,' direct or reflex, 'in more or less central globes,'—what can we say, except, with sorrow and shame, that it could have originated nowhere save in England? It is a general agglomerate of all facts, notions, whims and observations, as they lie in the brain of an English gentleman; as an English gentleman, of unusual thinking power, is led to fashion them, in his schools and in his world: all these thrown into the crucible, and if not fused, yet soldered or conglutinated with boundless patience; and now tumbled out here, heterogeneous, amorphous, unspeakable, a world's wonder. Most melancholy must we name the whole business; full of long-continued thought, earnestness, loftiness of mind; not without glances into the Deepest, a constant fearless endeavour after truth; and with all this nothing accomplished, but the perhaps absurdest Book written in our century by a thinking man. A shameful Abortion; which, however, need not now be smothered or mangled, for it is already dead; only, in our love and sorrowing reverence for the writer of *Anastasius*, and the heroic seeker of Light, though not bringer thereof, let it be buried and forgotten.

For ourselves, the loud discord which jars in these two Works, in innumerable works of the like import, and generally in all the Thought and Action of this period, does not any longer utterly confuse us. Unhappy who, in such a time, felt not, at all conjunctures, ineradicably in his heart the knowledge that a God made this Universe, and a Demon not! And shall Evil always prosper, then? Out of all Evil comes Good; and no Good that is possible but shall one day be real. Deep and sad as is our feeling that we stand yet in the bodeful Night; equally deep, indestructible is our assurance that the Morning also will not fail. Nay already, as we look round, streaks of a dayspring are in the east; it is dawning; when the time shall be fulfilled, it will be day. The progress of man towards higher and nobler developments of whatever is highest and noblest in him, lies not only prophesied to Faith, but now written to the eye of Observation, so that he who runs may read.

One great step of progress, for example, we should say, in actual circumstances, was this same; the clear ascertainment that we are in progress. About the grand Course of Providence, and his final Purposes with us, we can know nothing, or almost nothing: man begins in darkness, ends in darkness; mystery is everywhere around us and in us, under our feet, among our hands. Nevertheless so much has become evident to every one, that this wondrous Mankind is advancing somewhither; that at least all human things are, have been and forever will be, in Movement and Change;—as, indeed, for beings that exist in Time, by virtue of Time, and are made of Time, might have been long since understood. In some provinces, it is true, as in Experimental Science, this discovery is an old one; but in most others it belongs wholly to these latter days. How often, in former ages, by eternal Creeds, eternal Forms of Government and the like, has it been attempted, fiercely enough, and with destructive violence, to chain the Future under the Past; and say to the Providence, whose ways with man are mysterious, and through the great deep: Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther! A wholly insane attempt; and for man himself, could it prosper, the frightfulest of all enchantments, a very Life-in-Death. Man's task here below, the destiny of every individual man, is to be in turns Apprentice and Workman; or say rather, Scholar, Teacher, Discoverer: by nature he has a strength for learning, for imitating; but also a strength for acting, for knowing on his own account. Are we not in a world seen to be Infinite; the relations lying closest together modified by those latest discovered and lying

farthest asunder? Could you ever spell-bind man into a Scholar merely, so that he had nothing to discover, to correct; could you ever establish a Theory of the Universe that were entire, unimprovable, and which needed only to be got by heart; man then were spiritually defunct, the Species we now name Man had ceased to exist. But the gods, kinder to us than we are to ourselves, have forbidden such suicidal acts. As Phlogiston is displaced by Oxygen, and the Epicycles of Ptolemy by the Ellipses of Kepler; so does Paganism give place to Catholicism, Tyranny to Monarchy, and Feudalism to Representative Government,—where also the process does not stop. Perfection of Practice, like completeness of Opinion, is always approaching, never arrived; Truth, in the words of Schiller, *immer wird, nie ist;* never *is*, always *is a-being*.

Sad, truly, were our condition did we know but this, that Change is universal and inevitable. Launched into a dark shoreless sea of Pyrrhonism, what would remain for us but to sail aimless, hopeless; or make madly merry, while the devouring Death had not yet ingulfed us? As indeed, we have seen many, and still see many do. Nevertheless so stands it not. The venerator of the Past (and to what pure heart is the Past, in that 'moonlight of memory,' other than sad and holy?) sorrows not over its departure, as one utterly bereaved. The true Past departs not, nothing that was worthy in the Past departs; no Truth or Goodness realised by man ever dies, or can die; but is all still here, and, recognised or not, lives and works through endless changes. If all things, to speak in the German dialect, are discerned by us, and exist for us, in an element of Time, and therefore of Mortality and Mutability; yet Time itself reposes on Eternity: the truly Great and Transcendental has its basis and substance in Eternity; stands revealed to us as Eternity in a vesture of Time. Thus in all Poetry, Worship, Art, Society, as one form passes into another, nothing is lost: it is but the superficial, as it were the *body* only, that grows obsolete and dies; under the mortal body lies a *soul* which is immortal; which anew incarnates itself in fairer revelation; and the Present is the living sum-total of the whole Past.

In Change, therefore, there is nothing terrible, nothing supernatural: on the contrary, it lies in the very essence of our lot and life in this world. Today is not yesterday: we ourselves change; how can our Works and Thoughts, if they are always to be the fittest, continue always the same? Change, indeed, is painful; yet ever needful; and if Memory have its force and worth, so also

has Hope. Nay, if we look well to it, what is all Derangement, and necessity of great Change, in itself such an evil, but the product simply of *increased resources* which the old *methods* can no longer administer; of new wealth which the old coffers will no longer contain? What is it, for example, that in our own day bursts asunder the bonds of ancient Political Systems, and perplexes all Europe with the fear of Change, but even this: the increase of social resources, which the old social methods will no longer sufficiently administer? The new omnipotence of the Steam-engine is hewing asunder quite other mountains than the physical. Have not our economical distresses, those barnyard Conflagrations themselves, the frightfulest madness of our mad epoch, their rise also in what is a real increase: increase of Men; of human Force; properly, in such a Planet as ours, the most precious of all increases? It is true again, the ancient methods of administration will no longer suffice. Must the indomitable millions, full of old Saxon energy and fire, lie cooped-up in this Western Nook, choking one another, as in a Blackhole of Calcutta, while a whole fertile untenanted Earth, desolate for want of the ploughshare, cries: Come and till me, come and reap me? If the ancient Captains can no longer yield guidance, new must be sought after: for the difficulty lies not in nature, but in artifice; the European Calcutta-Blackhole has no walls but air ones and paper ones.—So too, Scepticism itself, with its innumerable mischiefs, what is it but the sour fruit of a most blessed increase, that of Knowledge; a fruit too that will not always continue *sour?*

In fact, much as we have said and mourned about the unproductive prevalence of Metaphysics, it was not without some insight into the use that lies in them. Metaphysical Speculation, if a necessary evil, is the forerunner of much good. The fever of Scepticism must needs burn itself out, and burn out thereby the Impurities that caused it; then again will there be clearness, health. The principle of life, which now struggles painfully, in the outer, thin and barren domain of the Conscious or Mechanical, may then withdraw into its inner sanctuaries, its abysses of mystery and miracle; withdraw deeper than ever into that domain of the Unconscious, by nature infinite and inexhaustible; and creatively work there. From that mystic region, and from that alone, all wonders, all Poesies, and Religions, and Social Systems have proceeded: the like wonders, and greater and higher, lie slumbering there; and, brooded on by the spirit of the waters, will evolve themselves, and rise like exhalations from the Deep.

Of our Modern Metaphysics, accordingly, may not this already be said, that if they have produced no Affirmation, they have destroyed much Negation? It is a disease expelling a disease: the fire of Doubt, as above hinted, consuming away the Doubtful; that so the Certain come to light, and again lie visible on the surface. English or French Metaphysics, in reference to this last stage of the speculative process, are not what we allude to here; but only the Metaphysics of the Germans. In France or England, since the days of Diderot and Hume, though all thought has been of a sceptico-metaphysical texture, so far as there was any Thought, we have seen no Metaphysics; but only more or less ineffectual questionings whether such could be. In the Pyrrhonism of Hume and the Materialism of Diderot, Logic had, as it were, overshot itself, overset itself. Now, though the athlete, to use our old figure, cannot, by much lifting, lift up his own body, he may shift it out of a laming posture, and get to stand in a free one. Such a service have German Metaphysics done for man's mind. The second sickness of Speculation has abolished both itself and the first. Friedrich Schlegel complains much of the fruitlessness, the tumult and transiency of German as of all Metaphysics; and with reason. Yet in that wide-spreading, deep-whirling vortex of Kantism, so soon metamorphosed into Fichteism, Schellingism, and then as Hegelism, and Cousinism, perhaps finally evaporated, is not this issue visible enough, That Pyrrhonism and Materialism, themselves necessary phenomena in European culture, have disappeared; and a Faith in Religion has again become possible and inevitable for the scientific mind; and the word *Free-thinker* no longer means the Denier or Caviller, but the Believer, or the Ready to believe? Nay, in the higher Literature of Germany, there already lies, for him that can read it, the beginning of a new revelation of the Godlike; as yet unrecognised by the mass of the world; but waiting there for recognition, and sure to find it when the fit hour comes. This age also is not wholly without its Prophets.

Again, under another aspect, if Utilitarianism, or Radicalism, or the Mechanical Philosophy, or by whatever name it is called, has still its long task to do; nevertheless we can now see through it and beyond it: in the better heads, even among us English, it has become obsolete; as in other countries, it has been, in such heads, for some forty or even fifty years. What sound mind among the French, for example, now fancies that men can be governed by 'Constitutions;' by the never so cunning mechanising

of Self-interests, and all conceivable adjustments of checking and balancing; in a word, by the best possible solution of this quite insoluble and impossible problem, *Given a world of Knaves, to produce an Honesty from their united action?* Were not experiments enough of this kind tried before all Europe, and found wanting, when, in that doomsday of France, the infinite gulf of human Passion shivered asunder the thin rinds of Habit; and burst forth all-devouring, as in seas of Nether Fire? Which cunningly-devised 'Constitution,' constitutional, republican, democratic, sansculottic, could bind that raging chasm together? Were they not all burnt up, like paper as they were, in its molten eddies; and still the fire-sea raged fiercer than before? It is not by Mechanism, but by Religion; not by Self-interest, but by Loyalty, that men are governed or governable.

Remarkable it is, truly, how everywhere the eternal fact begins again to be recognised, that there is a Godlike in human affairs; that God not only made us and beholds us, but is in us and around us; that the Age of Miracles, as it ever was, now is. Such recognition we discern on all hands and in all countries: in each country after its own fashion. In France, among the younger nobler minds, strangely enough; where, in their loud contention with the Actual and Conscious, the Ideal or Unconscious is, for the time, without exponent; where Religion means not the parent of Polity, as of all that is highest, but Polity itself; and this and the other earnest man has not been wanting, who could audibly whisper to himself: "Go to, I will make a religion." In England still more strangely; as in all things, worthy England will have its way: by the shrieking of hysterical women, casting out of devils, and other 'gifts of the Holy Ghost.' Well might Jean Paul say, in this his twelfth hour of the Night, 'the living dream;' well might he say, 'the dead walk.' Meanwhile let us rejoice rather that so much has been seen into, were it through never so diffracting media, and never so madly distorted; that in all dialects, though but half-articulately, this high Gospel begins to be preached; Man is still Man. The genius of Mechanism, as was once before predicted, will not always sit like a choking incubus on our soul; but at length, when by a new magic Word the old spell is broken, become our slave, and as familiar-spirit do all our bidding. 'We are near awakening when we dream that we dream.'

He that has an eye and a heart can even now say: Why should I falter? Light has come into the world; to such as love Light,

s Light must be loved, with a boundless all-doing, all-enduring
. For the rest, let that vain struggle to read the mystery of
Infinite cease to harass us. It is a mystery which, through all
, we shall only read here a line of, there another line of. Do
not already know that the name of the Infinite is GOOD, is
)? Here on Earth we are as Soldiers, fighting in a foreign
l; that understand not the plan of the campaign, and have no
d to understand it; seeing well what is at our hand to be done.
us do it like Soldiers; with submission, with courage, with a
oic joy. 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all
might.' Behind us, behind each one of us, lie Six Thousand
rs of human effort, human conquest: before us is the boundless
ıe, with its as yet uncreated and unconquered Continents and
lorados, which we, even we, have to conquer, to create; and from
bosom of Eternity there shine for us celestial guiding stars.

'My inheritance how wide and fair!
Time is my fair seed-field, of Time I'm heir.'

GOETHE'S PORTRAIT.

GOETHE'S PORTRAIT.[1]

[1832.]

READER! thou here beholdest the Eidolon of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. So looks and lives, now in his eighty-third year, afar in the bright little friendly circle of Weimar, 'the clearest, most universal man of his time.' Strange enough is the cunning that resides in the ten fingers, especially what they bring to pass by pencil and pen! Him who never saw England, England now sees: from Fraser's 'Gallery' he looks forth here, wondering, doubtless, how *he* came into such a '*Lichtstrasse*, lightstreet,' or galaxy; yet with kind recognition of all neighbours, even as the moon looks kindly on lesser lights, and, were they but fish-oil cressets, or terrestrial Vauxhall stars (of clipped tin), forbids not their shining.—Nay, the very soul of the man thou canst likewise behold. Do but look well in those forty volumes of 'musical wisdom,' which, under the title of *Goethes Werke*, Cotta of Tübingen, or Black and Young of Covent Garden,—once offer them a trifle of drink-money,—will cheerfully hand thee: greater sight, or more profitable, thou wilt not meet with in this generation. The German language, it is presumable, thou knowest; if not, shouldst thou undertake the study thereof for that sole end, it were well worth thy while.

Croquis, a man otherwise of rather satirical turn, surprises us, on this occasion, with a fit of enthusiasm. He declares often, that here is the finest of all living heads; speaks much of blended passion and repose; serene depths of eyes; the brow, the temples, royally arched, a very palace of thought;—and so forth.

The Writer of these Notices is not without decision of character, and can believe what he knows. He answers Brother Croquis, that it is no wonder the head should be royal and a palace; for a most royal work was appointed to be done therein. Reader! within that head the whole world lies mirrored, in such clear ethereal harmony as it has done in none since Shakspeare left us: even *this* rag-fair

[1] FRASER'S MAGAZINE, No. 26.—By Stieler of Munich: the copy in *Fraser's Magazine* proved a total failure and involuntary caricature,—resembling, as was said at the time, a wretched old clothesman carrying behind his back a hat which he seemed to have stolen.

of a world, wherein thou painfully strugglest, and (as is like) stumblest,—all lies transfigured here, and revealed authentically to be still holy, still divine. What alchemy was that: to find a mad universe full of scepticism, discord, desperation; and *transmute* it into a wise universe of belief, and melody, and reverence! Was not *there* an *opus magnum*, if one ever was? This, then, is he who, heroically doing and enduring, has accomplished it.

In this distracted Time of ours, wherein men have lost their old loadstars, and wandered after night-fires and foolish will-o'-wisps; and all things, in that 'shaking of the nations,' have been tumbled into chaos, the high made low, and the low high; and ever and anon some duke of this, and king of that, is gurgled aloft, to float there for moments; and fancies himself the governor and head-director of it all, and *is* but the topmost froth-bell, to burst again and mingle with the wild fermenting mass: in this so despicable Time, we say, there were nevertheless (be the bounteous Heavens ever thanked for it!) *two great men* sent among us. The one, in the island of St. Helena now sleeps 'dark and lone, amid the Ocean's everlasting lullaby;' the other still rejoices in the blessed sunlight, on the banks of the Ilme.

Great was the part allotted each, great the talent given him for the same; yet, mark the contrast! Bonaparte walked through the war-convulsed world like an all-devouring earthquake, heaving, thundering, hurling kingdom over kingdom; Goethe was as the mild-shining, inaudible Light, which, notwithstanding, can again make that Chaos into a Creation. Thus too, we see Napoleon, with his Austerlitzes, Waterloos and Borodinos, is quite gone; all departed, sunk to silence like a tavern-brawl. While this other!—*he* still shines with his direct radiance; his inspired words are to abide in living hearts, as the life and inspiration of thinkers, born and still unborn. Some fifty years hence, his thinking will be found translated, and ground down, even to the capacity of the diurnal press; acts of parliament will be passed in virtue of him:—this man, if we will consider of it, is appointed to be ruler of the world.

Reader! to thee thyself, even now, he has one counsel to give, the secret of his whole poetic alchemy: GEDENKE ZU LEBEN. Yes, 'think of living'! Thy life, wert thou the 'pitifulest of all the sons of earth,' is no idle dream, but a solemn reality. It is thy own; it is all thou hast to front eternity with. Work, then, even as he has done, and does,—'LIKE A STAR, UNHASTING, YET UNRESTING.'—*Sic vales.*

DEATH OF GOETHE.

DEATH OF GOETHE.[1]

[1832.]

ə Obituary of these days stands one article of quite peculiar
the time, the place and particulars of which will have to
ı repeated and re-written, and continue in remembrance
ɜnturies: this namely, that Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
Weimar, on the 22d March 1832. It was about eleven in
ning; 'he expired,' says the record, 'without any apparent
g, having, a few minutes previously, called for paper for the
ə of writing, and expressed his delight at the arrival of

A beautiful death; like that of a soldier found faithful
ɔst, and in the cold hand his arms still grasped! The
ast words are a greeting of the new-awakened Earth; his
'ement is to work at his appointed task. Beautiful; what
ɑt call a Classic sacred-death; if it were not rather an
ranslation,—in a chariot, not of fire and terror, but of hope
; vernal sunbeams! It was at Frankfort-on-Mayn, on the
August 1749, that this man entered the world: and now,
'elcoming the birthday of his eighty-second spring, he closes
, and takes farewell.

ɹen, our Greatest has departed. That melody of life, with
ing tones, which took captive ear and heart, has gone silent;
'enly force that dwelt here victorious over so much, is here
er; thus far, not farther, by speech and by act, shall the
n utter himself forth. The End! What solemn meaning
hat sound, as it peals mournfully through the soul, when a
'iend has passed away! All now is closed, irrevocable; the
ul life-picture, growing daily into new coherence, under new
and hues, has suddenly become completed and unchange-
ıere as it lay, it is dipped, from this moment, in the æther
eavens, and shines transfigured, to endure even so—forever.
ad Time's Empire; stern, wide-devouring, yet not without

[1] New Monthly Magazine, No. 138.

their grandeur! The week-day man, who was one of us, has put on the garment of Eternity, and become radiant and triumphant; the Present is all at once the Past; Hope is suddenly cut away, and only the backward vistas of Memory remain, shone on by a light that proceeds not from this earthly sun.

The death of Goethe, even for the many hearts that personally loved him, is not a thing to be lamented over; is to be viewed, in his own spirit, as a thing full of greatness and sacredness. For all men it is appointed once to die. To this man the full measure of a man's life had been granted, and a course and task such as to only a few in the whole generations of the world: what else could we hope or require but that now he should be called hence, and have leave to depart, having finished the work that was given him to do? If his course, as we may say of him more justly than of any other, was like the Sun's, so also was his going down. For indeed, as the material Sun is the eye and revealer of all things, so is Poetry, so is the World-Poet in a spiritual sense. Goethe's life too, if we examine it, is well represented in that emblem of a solar Day. Beautifully rose our summer sun, gorgeous in the red fervid east, scattering the spectres and sickly damps (of both of which there were enough to scatter); strong, benignant in his noonday clearness, walking triumphant through the upper realms; and now, mark also how he sets! '*So stirbt ein Held; anbetungsvoll*, So dies a hero; sight to be worshipped!'

And yet, when the inanimate material sun has sunk and disappeared, it will happen that we stand to gaze into the still-glowing west; and there rise great pale motionless clouds, like coulisses or curtains, to close the flame-theatre within; and then, in that death-pause of the Day, an unspeakable feeling will come over us: it is as if the poor sounds of Time, those hammerings of tired Labour on his anvils, those voices of simple men, had become awful and supernatural; as if in listening, we could hear them 'mingle with the everpealing tone of old Eternity.' In such moments the secrets of Life lie opener to us; mysterious things flit over the soul; Life itself seems holier, wonderful and fearful. How much more when our sunset was of a living sun; and *its* bright countenance and shining return to us, not on the morrow, but 'no more again, at all, forever'! In such a scene, silence, as over the mysterious great, is for him that has some feeling thereof the fittest mood. Nevertheless by silence the distant is not brought into communion; the feeling of each is without response from the bosom of his brother.

There are now, what some years ago there were not, English hearts that know something of what those three words, 'Death of Goethe,' mean; to such men, among their many thoughts on the event, which are not to be translated into speech, may these few, through that imperfect medium, prove acceptable.

'Death,' says the Philosopher, 'is a commingling of Eternity with 'Time; in the death of a good man, Eternity is seen looking through 'Time.' With such a sublimity here offered to eye and heart, it is not unnatural to look with new earnestness before and behind, and ask, What space in those years and æons of computed Time, this man with his activity may influence; what relation to the world of change and mortality, which the earthly name Life, he who is even now called to the Immortals has borne and may bear.

Goethe, it is commonly said, made a New Era in Literature; a Poetic Era began with him, the end or ulterior tendencies of which are yet nowise generally visible. This common saying is a true one; and true with a far deeper meaning than, to the most, it conveys. Were the Poet but a sweet sound and singer, solacing the ear of the idle with pleasant songs; and the new Poet one who could sing his idle pleasant song to a new air,—we should account him a small matter, and his performance small. But this man, it is not unknown to many, was a Poet in such a sense as the late generations have witnessed no other; as it is, in this generation, a kind of distinction to believe in the existence of, in the possibility of. The true Poet is ever, as of old, the Seer; whose eye has been gifted to discern the godlike Mystery of God's Universe, and decipher some new lines of its celestial writing; we can still call him a *Vates* and Seer; for he *sees* into this greatest of secrets, 'the open secret;' hidden things become clear; how the Future (both resting on Eternity) is but another phasis of the Present: thereby are his words in very truth prophetic; what he has spoken shall be done.

It begins now to be everywhere surmised that the real Force, which in this world all things must obey, is Insight, Spiritual Vision and Determination. The Thought is parent of the Deed, nay is living soul of it, and last and continual, as well as first mover of it; is the foundation and beginning and essence, therefore, of man's whole existence here below. In this sense, it has been said, the Word of man (the uttered Thought of man) is still a magic formula, whereby he rules the world. Do not the winds and waters, and all tumultuous powers, inanimate and animate, obey

him? A poor, quite mechanical Magician speaks; and fire-winged ships cross the Ocean at his bidding. Or mark, above all, that 'raging of the nations,' wholly in contention, desperation and dark chaotic fury; how the meek voice of a Hebrew Martyr and Redeemer stills it into order, and a savage Earth becomes kind and beautiful, and the habitation of horrid cruelty a temple of peace. The true Sovereign of the world, who moulds the world like soft wax, according to his pleasure, is he who lovingly *sees* into the world; the 'inspired Thinker,' whom in these days we name Poet. The true Sovereign is the Wise Man.

However, as the Moon, which can heave-up the Atlantic, sends not in her obedient billows at once, but gradually; and the Tide, which swells today on our shores, and washes every creek, rose in the bosom of the great Ocean (astronomers assure us) eight-and-forty hours ago; and indeed, all world-movements, by nature deep, are by nature calm, and flow and swell onwards with a certain majestic slowness: so too with the Impulse of a Great Man, and the effect he has to manifest on other men. To such a one we may grant some generation or two, before the celestial Impulse he impressed on the world will universally proclaim itself, and become (like the working of the Moon) if still not intelligible, yet palpable, to all men; some generation or two more, wherein it has to grow, and expand, and envelop all things, before it can reach its acme; and thereafter mingling with other movements and new impulses, at length cease to require a specific observation or designation. Longer or shorter such period may be, according to the nature of the Impulse itself, and of the elements it works in; according, above all, as the Impulse was intrinsically great and deep-reaching, or only wide-spread, superficial and transient. Thus, if David Hume is at this hour pontiff of the world, and rules most hearts, and guides most tongues (the hearts and tongues even of those that in vain rebel against him), there are nevertheless symptoms that his task draws towards completion; and now in the distance his successor becomes visible. On the other hand, we have seen a Napoleon, like some gunpowder force (with which sort, indeed, he chiefly worked), explode his whole virtue suddenly, and thunder himself out and silent, in a space of five-and-twenty years. While again, for a man of true greatness, working with spiritual implements, two centuries is no uncommon period; nay, on this Earth of ours, there have been men whose Impulse had not completed its development till after fifteen hundred years, and

might perhaps be seen still individually subsistent after two thousand.

But, as was once written, 'though our clock strikes when there 'is a change from hour to hour, no hammer in the Horologe of 'Time peals through the Universe to proclaim that there is a 'change from era to era.' The true Beginning is oftenest unnoticed and unnoticeable. Thus do men go wrong in their reckoning; and grope hither and thither, not knowing where they are, in what course their history runs. Within this last century, for instance, with its wild doings and destroyings, what hope, grounded on miscalculation, ending in disappointment! How many world-famous victories were gained and lost, dynasties founded and subverted, revolutions accomplished, constitutions sworn to; and ever the 'new era' was come, was coming, yet still it came not, but the time continued sick! Alas, all these were but spasmodic convulsions of the death-sick time: the crisis of cure and regeneration to the time was not there indicated. The real new era was when a Wise Man came into the world, with clearness of vision and greatness of soul to accomplish this old high enterprise, amid these new difficulties, yet again: A life of Wisdom. Such a man became, by Heaven's pre-appointment, in very deed the Redeemer of the time. Did he not bear the curse of the time? He was filled full with its scepticism, bitterness, hollowness and thousandfold contradictions, till his heart was like to break; but he subdued all this, rose victorious over this, and manifoldly by word and act showed others that come after, how to do the like. Honour to him who first 'through the impassable paves a road'! Such, indeed, is the task of every great man; nay of every good man in one or the other sphere, since goodness is greatness, and the good man, high or humble, is ever a martyr and 'spiritual hero that ventures forward into the gulf for our deliverance.' The gulf into which this man ventured, which he tamed and rendered habitable, was the greatest and most perilous of all, wherein truly all others lie included: *The whole distracted Existence of man is an age of Unbelief.* Whoso lives, whoso with earnest mind studies to live wisely in that mad element, may yet know, perhaps too well, what an enterprise was here; and for the Chosen Man of our time who could prevail in it, have the higher reverence, and a gratitude such as belongs to no other.

How far he prevailed in it, and by what means, with what endurances and achievements, will in due season be estimated.

Those volumes called *Goethe's Works* will now receive no farther addition or alteration; and the record of his whole spiritual Endeavour lies written there,—were the man or men but ready that could read it rightly! A glorious record; wherein he who would understand himself and his environment, who struggles for escape out of darkness into light as for the one thing needful, will long thankfully study. For the whole chaotic Time, what it has suffered, attained and striven after, stands imaged there; interpreted, ennobled into poetic clearness. From the passionate longings and wailings of *Werter*, spoken as from the heart of all Europe; onwards through the wild unearthly melody of *Faust*, like the spirit-song of falling worlds; to that serenely smiling wisdom of *Meisters Lehrjahre*, and the *German Hafiz*,—what an interval; and all enfolded in an ethereal music, as from unknown spheres, harmoniously uniting all! A long interval; and wide as well as long; for this was a universal man. History, Science, Art, human Activity under every aspect; the laws of Light in his *Farbenlehre;* the laws of wild Italian Life in his *Benvenuto Cellini;*—nothing escaped him; nothing that he did not look into that he did not see into. Consider, too, the genuineness of whatsoever he did; his hearty, idiomatic way; simplicity with loftiness, and nobleness, and aerial grace! Pure works of Art, completed with an antique Grecian polish, as *Torquato Tasso*, as *Iphigenie;* Proverbs; *Xenien;* Patriarchal Sayings, which, since the Hebrew Scriptures were closed, we know not where to match; in whose homely depths lie often the materials for volumes.

To measure and estimate all this, as we said, the time is not come; a century hence will be the fitter time. He who investigates it best will find its meaning greatest, and be the readiest to acknowledge that it transcends him. Let the reader have *seen*, before he attempts to *oversee*. A poor reader, in the mean while, were he who discerned not here the authentic rudiments of that same New Era, whereof we have so often had false warning. Wondrously, the wrecks and pulverised rubbish of ancient things, institutions, religions, forgotten noblenesses, made alive again by the breath of Genius, lie here in new coherence and incipient union, the spirit of Art working creative through the mass; that *chaos*, into which the eighteenth century with its wild war of hypocrites and sceptics had reduced the Past, begins here to be once more a *world*.—This, the highest that can be said of written Books, is to be said of these: there is in them a New Time, the prophecy and

beginning of a New Time. The corner-stone of a new social edifice for mankind is laid there; firmly, as before, on the natural rock: far-extending traces of a ground-plan we can also see; which future centuries may go on to enlarge, to amend and work into reality. These sayings seem strange to some; nevertheless they are not empty exaggerations, but expressions, in their way, of a belief, which is not now of yesterday; perhaps when Goethe has been read and meditated for another generation, they will not seem so strange.

Precious is the new light of Knowledge which our Teacher conquers for us; yet small to the new light of Love which also we derive from him: the most important element of any man's performance is the Life he has accomplished. Under the intellectual union of man and man, which works by precept, lies a holier union of affection, working by example; the influences of which latter, mystic, deep-reaching, all-embracing, can still less be computed. For Love is ever the beginning of Knowledge, as fire is of light; and works also more in the manner of *fire*. That Goethe was a great Teacher of men means already that he was a good man; that he had himself learned; in the school of experience had striven and proved victorious. To how many hearers, languishing, nigh dead, in the airless dungeon of Unbelief (a true vacuum and nonentity), has the assurance that there was such a man, that such a man was still possible, come like tidings of great joy! He who would learn to reconcile reverence with clearness; to deny and defy what is False, yet believe and worship what is True; amid raging factions, bent on what is either altogether empty or has substance in it only for a day, which stormfully convulse and tear hither and thither a distracted expiring system of society, to adjust himself aright; and, working for the world and in the world, keep himself unspotted from the world,—let him look here. This man, we may say, became morally great, by being in his own age, what in some other ages many might have been, a genuine man. His grand excellency was this, that he was genuine. As his primary faculty, the foundation of all others, was Intellect, depth and force of Vision; so his primary virtue was Justice, was the courage to be just. A giant's strength we admired in him; yet, strength ennobled into softest mildness; even like that 'silent rock-bound strength of a world,' on whose bosom, which rests on the adamant, grow flowers. The greatest of hearts was also the bravest; fearless, unwearied, peacefully invincible. A completed man: the trembling sensibility, the wild enthusiasm of a Mignon can assort with

the scornful world-mockery of a Mephistopheles; and each side of many-sided life receives its due from him.

Goethe reckoned Schiller happy that he died young, in the full vigour of his days; that we could 'figure him as a youth forever.' To himself a different, higher destiny was appointed. Through all the changes of man's life, onwards to its extreme verge he was to go; and through them all nobly. In youth, flatterings of fortune, uninterrupted outward prosperity cannot corrupt him; a wise observer has to remark: 'None but a Goethe, at the Sun of earthly 'happiness, can keep his phœnix-wings unsinged.'—Through manhood, in the most complex relation, as poet, courtier, politician, man of business, man of speculation; in the middle of revolutions and counter-revolutions, outward and spiritual; with the world loudly for him, with the world loudly or silently against him; in all seasons and situations, he holds equally on his way. Old age itself, which is called dark and feeble, he was to render lovely: who that looked upon him there, venerable in himself, and in the world's reverence ever the clearer, the purer, but could have prayed that he too were such an old man? And did not the kind Heavens continue kind, and grant to a career so glorious the worthiest end?

Such was Goethe's Life; such has his departure been. He sleeps now beside his Schiller and his Carl August of Weimar: so had the Prince willed it, that between these two should be his own final rest. In life they were united, in death they are not divided. The unwearied Workman now rests from his labours; the fruit of these is left growing, and to grow. His earthly years have been numbered and ended: but of his Activity, for it stood rooted in the Eternal, there is no end. All that we mean by the higher Literature of Germany, which is the higher Literature of Europe, already gathers round this man, as its creator; of which grand object, dawning mysterious on a world that hoped not for it, who is there that can measure the significance and far-reaching influences? The Literature of Europe will pass away; Europe itself, the Earth itself will pass away: this little life-boat of an Earth, with its noisy crew of a Mankind, and all their troubled History, will one day have vanished; faded like a cloud-speck from the azure of the All! What, then, is man! What, then, is man! He endures but for an hour, and is crushed before the moth. Yet in the being and in the working of a faithful man is there already (as all faith, from the beginning, gives assurance) a something that pertains not to this wild death-

clement of Time; that triumphs over Time, and *is*, and will be, when Time shall be no more.

And now we turn back into the world, withdrawing from this new-made grave. The man whom we love lies there: but glorious, worthy; and his spirit yet lives in us with an authentic life. Could each here vow to do his little task, even as the Departed did his great one; in the manner of a true man, not for a Day, but for Eternity! To live, as he counselled and commanded, not commodiously in the Reputable, the Plausible, the Half, but resolutely in the Whole, the Good, the True:

'*Im Ganzen, Guten, Wahren resolut zu leben!*'

BIOGRAPHY.

BIOGRAPHY.[1]

[1832.]

MAN'S sociality of nature evinces itself, in spite of all that can be said, with abundant evidence by this one fact, were there no other: the unspeakable delight he takes in Biography. It is written, 'The proper study of mankind is man;' to which study, let us candidly admit, he, by true or by false methods, applies himself, nothing loath. 'Man is perennially interesting to man; nay, if we look 'strictly to it, there is nothing else interesting.' How inexpressibly comfortable to know our fellow-creature; to see into him, understand his goings-forth, decipher the whole heart of his mystery: nay, not only to see into him, but even to see out of him, to view the world altogether as he views it; so that we can theoretically construe him, and could almost practically personate him; and do now thoroughly discern both what manner of man he is, and what manner of thing he has got to work on and live on!

A scientific interest and a poetic one alike inspire us in this matter. A scientific: because every mortal has a Problem of Existence set before him, which, were it only, what for the most it is, the Problem of keeping soul and body together, must be to a certain extent *original*, unlike every other; and yet, at the same time, so *like* every other; like our own, therefore; instructive, moreover, since we also are indentured to *live*. A poetic interest still more: for precisely this same struggle of human Freewill against material Necessity, which every man's Life, by the mere circumstance that the man continues alive, will more or less victoriously exhibit,—is that which above all else, or rather inclusive of all else, calls the Sympathy of mortal hearts into action; and whether as acted, or as represented and written of, not only is

[1] FRASER'S MAGAZINE, No. 27 (for April).—*The Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D.; including a Tour to the Hebrides.* By James Boswell, Esq.—A new Edition, with numerous Additions and Notes, by John Wilson Croker, LL.D., F.R.S. 5 vols. London, 1831.

Poetry, but is the sole Poetry possible. Borne onwards by which two all-embracing interests, may the earnest Lover of Biography expand himself on all sides, and indefinitely enrich himself. Looking with the eyes of every new neighbour, he can discern a new world different for each: feeling with the heart of every neighbour, he lives with every neighbour's life, even as with his own. Of these millions of living men, each individual is a mirror to us; a mirror both scientific and poetic; or, if you will, both natural and magical; —from which one would so gladly draw aside the gauze veil; and, peering therein, discern the image of his own natural face, and the supernatural secrets that prophetically lie under the same!

Observe, accordingly, to what extent, in the actual course of things, this business of Biography is practised and relished. Define to thyself, judicious Reader, the real significance of these phenomena, named Gossip, Egoism, Personal Narrative (miraculous or not), Scandal, Raillery, Slander, and suchlike; the sum-total of which (with some fractional addition of a better ingredient, generally too small to be noticeable) constitutes that other grand phenomenon still called 'Conversation.' Do they not mean wholly: *Biography* and *Autobiography?* Not only in the common Speech of men; but in all Art too, which is or should be the concentrated and conserved essence of what men can speak and show, Biography is almost the one thing needful.

Even in the highest works of Art, our interest, as the critics complain, is too apt to be strongly or even mainly of a Biographic sort. In the Art we can nowise forget the Artist: while looking on the *Transfiguration*, while studying the *Iliad*, we ever strive to figure to ourselves what spirit dwelt in Raphael; what a head was that of Homer, wherein, woven of Elysian light and Tartarean gloom, that old world fashioned itself together, of which these written Greek characters are but a feeble though perennial copy. The Painter and the Singer are present to us; we partially and for the time become the very Painter and the very Singer, while we enjoy the Picture and the Song. Perhaps too, let the critic say what he will, this is the highest enjoyment, the clearest recognition, we can have of these. Art indeed is Art; yet Man also is Man. Had the *Transfiguration* been painted without human hand had it grown merely on the canvas, say by atmospheric influences as lichen-pictures do on rocks,—it were a grand Picture doubtless yet nothing like so grand as *the* Picture, which, on opening our eyes, we everywhere in Heaven and in Earth see painted; and

everywhere pass over with indifference,—because the Painter was not a Man. Think of this; much lies in it. The Vatican is great; yet poor to Chimborazo or the Peak of Teneriffe: its dome is but a foolish Big-endian or Little-endian chip of an egg-shell, compared with that star-fretted Dome where Arcturus and Orion glance forever; which latter, notwithstanding, who looks at, save perhaps some necessitous star-gazer bent to make Almanacs; some thick-quilted watchman, to see what weather it will prove? The Biographic interest is wanting: no Michael Angelo was He who built that 'Temple of Immensity;' therefore do we, pitiful Littlenesses as we are, turn rather to wonder and to worship in the little toybox of a Temple built by our like.

Still more decisively, still more exclusively does the Biographic interest manifest itself, as we descend into lower regions of spiritual communication; through the whole range of what is called Literature. Of History, for example, the most honoured, if not honourable species of composition, is not the whole purport Biographic? 'History,' it has been said, 'is the essence of innumerable Biographies.' Such, at least, it should be: whether it is, might admit of question. But, in any case, what hope have we in turning over those old interminable Chronicles, with their garrulities and insipidities; or still worse, in patiently examining those modern Narrations, of the Philosophic kind, where 'Philosophy, teaching by Experience,' has to sit like owl on housetop, *seeing* nothing, *understanding* nothing, uttering only, with such solemnity, her perpetual most wearisome *hoo-hoo*:—what hope have we, except the for most part fallacious one of gaining some acquaintance with our fellow-creatures, though dead and vanished, yet dear to us; how they got along in those old days, suffering and doing; to what extent, and under what circumstances, they resisted the Devil and triumphed over him, or struck their colours to him, and were trodden under foot by him; how, in short, the perennial Battle went, which men name Life, which we also in these new days, with indifferent fortune, have to fight, and must bequeath to our sons and grandsons to go on fighting,—till the Enemy one day be quite vanquished and abolished, or else the great Night sink and part the combatants; and thus, either by some Millennium or some new Noah's Deluge, the Volume of Universal History wind itself up! Other hope, in studying such Books, we have none: and that it is a deceitful hope, who that has tried knows not? A feast of widest Biographic insight is spread for us; we enter full of

hungry anticipations: alas, like so many other feasts, which Life invites us to, a mere Ossian's 'feast of *shells*,'—the food and liquor being all emptied out and clean gone, and only the vacant dishes and deceitful emblems thereof left! Your modern Historical Restaurateurs are indeed little better than high-priests of Famine; that keep choicest china dinner-sets, only no dinner to serve therein. Yet such is our Biographic appetite, we run trying from shop to shop, with ever new hope; and, unless we could eat the wind, with ever new disappointment.

Again, consider the whole class of Fictitious Narratives; from the highest category of epic or dramatic Poetry, in Shakspeare and Homer, down to the lowest of froth Prose in the Fashionable Novel. What are all these but so many mimic Biographies? Attempts, here by an inspired Speaker, there by an uninspired Babbler, to deliver himself, more or less ineffectually, of the grand secret wherewith all hearts labour oppressed: The significance of Man's Life;—which deliverance, even as traced in the unfurnished head, and printed at the Minerva Press, finds readers. For, observe, though there is *a* greatest Fool, as a superlative in every kind; and *the* most Foolish man in the Earth is now indubitably living and breathing, and did this morning or lately eat breakfast, and is even now digesting the same; and looks out on the world with his dim horn-eyes, and inwardly forms some unspeakable theory thereof: yet where shall the authentically Existing be personally met with! Can one of us, otherwise than by guess, know that we have got sight of him, have orally communed with him? To take even the narrower sphere of this our English Metropolis, can any one confidently say to himself, that he has conversed with the identical, individual Stupidest man now extant in London? No one. Deep as we dive in the Profound, there is ever a new depth opens: where the ultimate bottom may lie, through what new scenes of being we must pass before reaching it (except that we know it does lie somewhere, and might by human faculty and opportunity be reached), is altogether a mystery to us. Strange, tantalising pursuit! We have the fullest assurance, not only that there is a Stupidest of London men actually resident, with bed and board of some kind, in London; but that several persons have been or perhaps are now speaking face to face with him: while for us, chase it as we may, such scientific blessedness will too probably be forever denied!—But the thing we meant to enforce was this comfortable fact, that no known Head was so wooden, but there might be other

heads to which it were a genius and Friar Bacon's Oracle. Of no given Book, not even of a Fashionable Novel, can you predicate with certainty that its vacuity is absolute; that there are not other vacuities which shall partially replenish themselves therefrom, and esteem it a *plenum*. How knowest thou, may the distressed Novelwright exclaim, that I, here where I sit, am the Foolishest of existing mortals; that this my Long-ear of a Fictitious Biography shall not find one and the other, into whose still longer ears it may be the means, under Providence, of instilling somewhat? We answer, None knows, none can certainly know: therefore, write on, worthy Brother, even as thou canst, even as it has been given thee.

Here, however, in regard to 'Fictitious Biographies,' and much other matter of like sort, which the greener mind in these days inditeth, we may as well insert some singular sentences on the importance and significance of *Reality*, as they stand written for us in Professor Gottfried Sauerteig's *Æsthetische Springwurzeln;* a Work, perhaps, as yet new to most English readers. The Professor and Doctor is not a man whom we can praise without reservation; neither shall we say that his *Springwurzeln* (a sort of magical pick-locks, as he affectedly names them) are adequate to '*start*' every *bolt* that locks-up an æsthetic mystery: nevertheless, in his crabbed, one-sided way, he sometimes hits masses of the truth. We endeavour to translate faithfully, and trust the reader will find it worth serious perusal:

'The significance, even for poetic purposes,' says Sauerteig, 'that 'lies in REALITY is too apt to escape us; is perhaps only now be-'ginning to be discerned. When we named *Rousseau's Confessions* 'an elegiaco-didactic Poem, we meant more than an empty figure of 'speech; we meant a historical scientific fact.

'Fiction, while the feigner of it knows that he is feigning, par-'takes, more than we suspect, of the nature of *lying;* and has ever 'an, in some degree, unsatisfactory character. All Mythologies 'were once Philosophies; were *believed:* the Epic Poems of old 'time, so long as they continued *epic*, and had any complete impres-'siveness, were Histories, and understood to be narratives of *facts*. 'In so far as Homer employed his gods as mere ornamental fringes, 'and had not himself, or at least did not expect his hearers to have, 'a belief that they were real agents in those antique doings; so far 'did he fail to be *genuine;* so far was he a partially *hollow* and false 'singer; and sang to please only a portion of man's mind, not the 'whole thereof.

'Imagination is, after all, but a poor matter when it has to part 'company with Understanding, and even front it hostilely in flat 'contradiction. Our mind is divided in twain: there is contest; 'wherein that which is weaker must needs come to the worse. 'Now of all feelings, states, principles, call it what you will, in 'man's mind, is not Belief the clearest, strongest; against which 'all others contend in vain? Belief is, indeed, the beginning and 'first condition of all spiritual Force whatsoever: only in so far 'as Imagination, were it but momentarily, is *believed*, can there 'be any use or meaning in it, any enjoyment of it. And what is 'momentary Belief? The enjoyment of a moment. Whereas a 'perennial Belief were enjoyment perennially, and with the whole 'united soul.

'It is thus that I judge of the Supernatural in an Epic Poem; 'and would say, the instant it has ceased to be authentically 'supernatural, and become what you call "Machinery:" sweep it 'out of sight (*schaff' es mir vom Halse*)! Of a truth, that same '"Machinery," about which the critics make such hubbub, was 'well named *Machinery;* for it is in very deed mechanical, nowise 'inspired or poetical. Neither for us is there the smallest æsthetic 'enjoyment in it; save only in this way; that we believe it *to have* '*been believed*,—by the Singer or his Hearers; into whose case 'we now laboriously struggle to transport ourselves; and so, with 'stinted enough result, catch some reflex of the Reality, which for 'them was wholly real, and visible face to face.' Whenever it has 'come so far that your "Machinery" is avowedly mechanical and 'unbelieved,—what is it else, if we dare tell ourselves the truth, but 'a miserable, meaningless Deception, kept-up by old use and wont 'alone? If the gods of an *Iliad* are to us no longer authentic 'Shapes of Terror, heart-stirring, heart-appalling, but only vague- 'glittering Shadows,—what must the dead Pagan gods of an '*Epigoniad* be, the dead-living Pagan-Christian gods of a *Lusiad*, 'the concrete-abstract, evangelical-metaphysical gods of a *Paradise* '*Lost*? Superannuated lumber! Cast raiment, at best; in which 'some poor mime, strutting and swaggering, may or may not set 'forth new noble Human Feelings (again a Reality), and so secure, 'or not secure, our pardon of such hoydenish masking; for which, 'in any case, he has a pardon to *ask*.

'True enough, none but the earliest Epic Poems can claim this 'distinction of entire credibility, of Reality: after an *Iliad*, a '*Shaster*, a *Koran*, and other the like primitive performances, the

'rest seem, by this rule of mine, to be altogether excluded from the 'list. Accordingly, what *are* all the rest, from Virgil's *Æneid* down-'wards, in comparison? Frosty, artificial, heterogeneous things; 'more of gumflowers than of roses; at the best, of the two mixed 'incoherently together: to some of which, indeed, it were hard to 'deny the title of Poems; yet to no one of which can that title 'belong in any sense even resembling the old high one it, in those 'old days, conveyed,—when the epithet "divine" or "sacred" as 'applied to the uttered Word of man, was not a vain metaphor, a 'vain sound, but a real name with meaning. Thus, too, the farther 'we recede from those early days, when Poetry, as true Poetry is 'always, was still sacred or divine, and inspired (what ours, in great 'part, only pretends to be),—the more impossible becomes it to 'produce any, we say not true Poetry, but tolerable semblance of 'such; the hollower, in particular, grow all manner of Epics; till at 'length, as in this generation, the very name of Epic sets men a-'yawning, the announcement of a new Epic is received as a public 'calamity.

'But what if the *impossible* being once for all quite discarded, 'the *probable* be well adhered to: how stands it with fiction *then?* 'Why, then, I would say, the evil is much mended, but nowise 'completely cured. We have then, in place of the wholly dead 'modern Epic, the partially living modern Novel; to which latter 'it is much easier to lend that above mentioned, so essential '"momentary credence" than to the former: indeed, infinitely 'easier; for the former being flatly incredible, no mortal *can* for a 'moment credit it, for a moment enjoy it. Thus, here and there, a '*Tom Jones*, a *Meister*, a *Crusoe*, will yield no little solacement to 'the minds of men; though still immeasurably less than a *Reality* 'would, were the significance thereof as impressively unfolded, were 'the genius that could so unfold it once given us by the kind 'Heavens. Neither say thou that proper Realities are wanting: 'for Man's Life, now, as of old, is the genuine work of God; 'wherever there is a Man, a God also is revealed, and all that is 'Godlike: a whole epitome of the Infinite, with its meanings, lies 'enfolded in the Life of every Man. Only, alas, that the Seer to 'discern this same Godlike, and with fit utterance *un*fold it for us, 'is wanting, and may long be wanting!

'Nay, a question arises on us here, wherein the whole German 'reading-world will eagerly join: Whether man *can* any longer be 'so interested by the spoken Word, as he often was in those primeval

'days, when rapt away by its inscrutable power, he pronounced it, 'in such dialect as he had, to be *transcendental* (to *transcend* all 'measure), to be sacred, prophetic and the inspiration of a god? 'For myself, I (*ich meines Ortes*), by faith or by insight, do heartily 'understand that the answer to such question will be, Yea! For 'never(that I could in searching find out, has Man been, by Time 'which devours so much, deprivated of any faculty whatsoever that 'he in any era was possessed of. To my seeming, the babe born 'yesterday has all the organs of Body, Soul and Spirit, and in 'exactly the same combination and entireness, that the oldest 'Pelasgic Greek, or Mesopotamian Patriarch, or Father Adam him-'self could boast of. Ten fingers, one heart with venous and arterial 'blood therein, still belong to man that is born of woman: when 'did he lose any of his spiritual Endowments either; above all, his 'highest spiritual Endowment, that of revealing Poetic Beauty, and 'of adequately receiving the same? Not the material, not the 'susceptibility is wanting; only the Poet, or long series of Poets, 'to work on these. True, alas too true, the Poet *is* still utterly 'wanting, or all but utterly: nevertheless have we not centuries 'enough before us to produce him in? Him and much else!—I, 'for the present, will but predict that chiefly by working more and 'more on REALITY, and evolving more and more wisely *its* inex-'haustible meanings; and, in brief, speaking forth in fit utterance 'whatsoever our whole soul *believes*, and ceasing to speak forth 'what thing soever our whole soul does not believe,—will this 'high emprise be accomplished, or approximated to.'

These notable, and not unfounded, though partial and *deep*-seeing rather than *wide*-seeing observations on the great import of REALITY, considered even as a poetic material, we have inserted the more willingly, because a transient feeling to the same purpose may often have suggested itself to many readers; and, on the whole, it is good that every reader and every writer understand, with all intensity of conviction, what quite infinite worth lies in *Truth*; how all-pervading, omnipotent, in man's mind, is the thing we name *Belief*. For the rest, Herr Sauerteig, though one-sided, on this matter of Reality, seems heartily persuaded, and is not perhaps so ignorant as he looks. It cannot be unknown to him, for example, what noise is made about 'Invention;' what a supreme rank this faculty is reckoned to hold in the poetic endowment. Great truly is Invention; nevertheless, that is but a poor exercise of it with which Belief is not concerned. 'An Irishman with whisky in his

head,' as poor Byron said, will invent you, in this kind, till there is enough and to spare. Nay, perhaps, if we consider well, the highest exercise of Invention has, in very deed, nothing to do with Fiction; but is an invention of new Truth, what we can call a Revelation; which last does undoubtedly transcend all other poetic efforts, nor can Herr Sauerteig be too loud in its praises. But, on the other hand, whether such effort is still possible for man, Herr Sauerteig and the bulk of the world are probably at issue;—and will probably continue so till that same 'Revelation,' or new 'Invention of Reality,' of the sort he desiderates, shall itself make its appearance.

Meanwhile, quitting these airy regions, let any one bethink him how impressive the smallest historical *fact* may become, as contrasted with the grandest *fictitious event;* what an incalculable force lies for us in this consideration: The Thing which I here hold imaged in my mind did actually occur; was, in very truth, an element in the system of the All, whereof I too form part; had therefore, and has, through all time, an authentic being; is not a dream, but a reality! We ourselves can remember reading, in *Lord Clarendon*,[2] with feelings perhaps somehow accidentally opened to it,—certainly with a depth of impression strange to us then and now,—that insignificant-looking passage, where Charles, after the battle of Worcester, glides down, with Squire Careless, from the Royal Oak, at nightfall, being hungry: how, 'making a shift to get 'over hedges and ditches, after walking at least eight or nine miles, 'which were the more grievous to the King by the weight of his 'boots (for he could not put *them* off when he cut off his hair, for 'want of shoes), before morning they came to *a poor cottage, the 'owner whereof, being a Roman Catholic, was known to Careless.*' How this poor drudge, being knocked-up from his snoring, 'carried 'them into a little barn full of hay, which was a better lodging than 'he had for himself;' and by and by, not without difficulty, brought his Majesty 'a piece of bread and a great pot of buttermilk,' saying candidly that "he himself lived by his daily labour, and that what he had brought him was the fare he and his wife had:" on which nourishing diet his Majesty, 'staying upon the haymow,' feeds thankfully for two days; and then departs, under new guidance, having first changed clothes, down to the very shirt and 'old pair of shoes,' with his landlord; and so, as worthy Bunyan has it, 'goes on his way, and sees him no more.' Singular enough, if we will think of it! This, then, was a genuine flesh-and-blood Rustic of

[2] *History of the Rebellion*, iii. 625.

the year 1651: he did actually swallow bread and buttermilk (not having ale and bacon), and do field-labour: with these hobnailed 'shoes' has sprawled through mud-roads in winter, and, jocund or not, driven his team a-field in summer: he made bargains; had chafferings and higglings, now a sore heart, now a glad one; was born; was a son, was a father; toiled in many ways, being forced to it, till the strength was all worn out of him; and then—lay down 'to rest his galled back,' and sleep there till the long-distant morning!—How comes it, that he alone of all the British rustics who tilled and lived along with him, on whom the blessed sun on that same 'fifth day of September' was shining, should have chanced to rise on us; that this poor pair of clouted Shoes, out of the million million hides that have been tanned, and cut, and worn, should still subsist, and hang visibly together? We see him but for a moment; for one moment, the blanket of the Night is rent asunder, so that we behold and see, and then closes over him—forever.

So too, in some *Boswell's Life of Johnson*, how indelible and magically bright does many a little *Reality* dwell in our remembrance! There is no need that the personages on the scene be a King and Clown; that the scene be the Forest of the Royal Oak, 'on the borders of Staffordshire:' need only that the scene lie on this old firm Earth of ours, where we also have so surprisingly arrived; that the personages be *men*, and *seen* with the eyes of a man. Foolish enough, how some slight, perhaps mean and even ugly incident, if *real* and well presented, will fix itself in a susceptive memory, and lie ennobled there; silvered over with the pale cast of thought, with the pathos which belongs only to the Dead. For the Past is all holy to us; the Dead are all holy, even they that were base and wicked while alive. Their baseness and wickedness was not *They*, was but the heavy and unmanageable Environment that lay round them, with which they fought unprevailing: *they* (the ethereal god-given Force that dwelt in them, and was their *Self*) have now shuffled-off that heavy Environment, and are free and pure: their life-long Battle, go how it might, is all ended, with many wounds or with fewer; they have been recalled from it, and the once harsh-jarring battle-field has become a silent awe-inspiring Golgotha, and *Gottesacker* (Field of God)!—Boswell relates this in itself smallest and poorest of occurrences: 'As we walked along the 'Strand tonight, arm in arm, a woman of the town accosted us in 'the usual enticing manner. "No, no, my girl," said Johnson; "it

'won't do." He, however, did not treat her with harshness; and 'we talked of the wretched life of such women.' Strange power of *Reality!* Not even this poorest of occurrences, but now, after seventy years are come and gone, has a meaning for us. Do but consider that it is *true;* that it did in very deed occur! That unhappy Outcast, with all her sins and woes, her lawless desires, too complex mischances, her wailings and her riotings, has departed utterly; alas! her siren finery has got all besmutched, ground, generations since, into dust and smoke; of her degraded body, and whole miserable earthly existence, all is away: *she* is no longer here, but far from us, in the bosom of Eternity,—whence we too came, whither we too are bound! Johnson said, "No, no, my girl; it won't do;" and then 'we talked;'—and herewith the wretched one, seen but for the twinkling of an eye, passes on into the utter Darkness. No high Calista, that ever issued from Story-teller's brain, will impress us more deeply than this meanest of the mean; and for a good reason: That *she* issued from the Maker of Men.

It is well worth the Artist's while to examine for himself what it is that gives such pitiable incidents their memorableness; his aim likewise is, above all things, to be *memorable.* Half the effect, we already perceive, depends on the object; on its being *real,* on its being really *seen.* The other half will depend on the observer; and the question now is: How are real objects to be *so* seen; on what quality of observing, or of style in describing, does this so intense pictorial power depend? Often a slight circumstance contributes curiously to the result: some little, and perhaps to appearance accidental, feature is presented; a light-gleam, which instantaneously *excites* the mind, and urges it to complete the picture, and evolve the meaning thereof for itself. By critics, such light-gleams and their almost magical influence have frequently been noted: but the power to produce such, to select such features as will produce them, is generally treated as a knack, or trick of the trade, a secret for being 'graphic;' whereas these magical feats are, in truth, rather inspirations; and the gift of performing them, which acts unconsciously, without forethought, and as if by nature alone, is properly a *genius* for description.

One grand, invaluable secret there is, however, which includes all the rest, and, what is comfortable, lies clearly in every man's power: *To have an open loving heart, and what follows from the possession of such.* Truly, it has been said, emphatically in these days ought it to be repeated: A loving Heart is the beginning

of all Knowledge. This it is that opens the whole mind, quickens every faculty of the intellect to do its fit work, that of *knowing;* and therefrom, by sure consequence, of *vividly uttering-forth.* Other secret for being 'graphic' is there none, worth having: but this is an all-sufficient one. See, for example, what a small Boswell can do! Hereby, indeed, is the whole man made a living mirror, wherein the wonders of this ever-wonderful Universe are, in their true light (which is ever a magical, miraculous one) represented, and reflected back on us. It has been said, 'the heart sees farther than the head:' but, indeed, without the seeing heart, there is no true seeing for the head so much as possible; all is mere *oversight,* hallucination and vain superficial phantasmagoria, which can permanently profit no one.

Here, too, may we not pause for an instant, and make a practical reflection? Considering the multitude of mortals that handle the Pen in these days, and can mostly spell, and write without glaring violations of grammar, the question naturally arises: How is it, then, that no Work proceeds from them, bearing any stamp of authenticity and permanence; of worth for more than one day? Ship-loads of Fashionable Novels, Sentimental Rhymes, Tragedies, Farces, Diaries of Travel, Tales by flood and field, are swallowed monthly into the bottomless Pool: still does the Press toil; innumerable Paper-makers, Compositors, Printers' Devils, Book-binders, and Hawkers grown hoarse with loud proclaiming, rest not from their labour; and still, in torrents, rushes on the great array of Publications, unpausing, to their final home; and still Oblivion, like the Grave, cries, Give! Give! How is it that of all these countless multitudes, no one can attain to the smallest mark of excellence, or produce aught that shall endure longer than 'snow-flake on the river,' or the foam of penny-beer? We answer: Because they *are* foam; because there is no *Reality* in them. These Three Thousand men, women and children, that make up the army of British Authors, do not, if we will well consider it, *see* anything whatever; consequently *have* nothing that they can record and utter, only more or fewer things that they can plausibly pretend to record. The Universe, of Man and Nature, is still quite shut-up from them; the 'open secret' still utterly a secret; because no sympathy with Man or Nature, no love and free simplicity of heart has yet unfolded the same. Nothing but a pitiful Image of their own pitiful Self, with its vanities, and grudgings, and ravenous hunger of all kinds, hangs forever painted

in the retina of these unfortunate persons; so that the starry ALL, with whatsoever it embraces, does but appear as some expanded magic-lantern shadow of that same Image,—and naturally looks pitiful enough.

It is vain for these persons to allege that they are naturally without gift, naturally stupid and sightless, and so *can* attain to no knowledge of anything; therefore, in writing of anything, must needs write falsehoods of it, there being in it no truth for them. Not so, good Friends. The stupidest of you has a certain faculty; were it but that of articulate speech (say, in the Scottish, the Irish, the Cockney dialect, or even in 'Governess-English'), and of physically discerning what lies under your nose. The stupidest of you would perhaps grudge to be compared in faculty with James Boswell; yet see what he has produced! You do not use your faculty honestly; your heart is shut up; full of greediness, malice, discontent; so your intellectual sense cannot be open. It is vain also to urge that James Boswell had opportunities; saw great men and great things, such as you can never hope to look on. What make ye of Parson White in Selborne? He had not only no great men to look on, but not even men; merely sparrows and cock-chafers: yet has he left us a *Biography* of these; which, under its title *Natural History of Selborne*, still remains valuable to us; which has copied a little sentence or two *faithfully* from the Inspired Volume of Nature, and so is itself not without inspiration. Go ye and do likewise. Sweep away utterly all frothiness and falsehood from your heart; struggle unweariedly to acquire, what is possible for every god-created Man, a free, open, humble soul: *speak not at all, in any wise, till you have somewhat to speak;* care not for the *reward* of your speaking, but simply and with undivided mind for the *truth* of your speaking: then be placed in what section of Space and of Time soever, do but open your eyes, and they shall actually *see*, and bring you real *knowledge*, wondrous, worthy of *belief;* and instead of one Boswell and one White, the world will rejoice in a thousand,—stationed on their thousand several watch-towers, to instruct us by indubitable documents, of whatsoever in our so stupendous World comes to light and *is!* O, had the Editor of this Magazine but a magic rod to turn all that not inconsiderable Intellect, which now deluges us with artificial fictitious soap-lather, and mere Lying, into the faithful study of Reality,—what knowledge of great, everlasting Nature, and of Man's ways and doings therein, would not every year bring us in! Can we but

change one single soap-latherer and mountebank Juggler, into a true Thinker and Doer, who even *tries* honestly to think and do,—great will be our reward.

But to return; or rather from this point to begin our journey! If now, what with Herr Sauerteig's *Springwurzeln*, what with so much lucubration of our own, it have become apparent how deep, immeasurable is the 'worth that lies in *Reality*,' and farther, how exclusive the interest which man takes in Histories of Man, —may it not seem lamentable, that so few genuinely good *Biographies* have yet been accumulated in Literature; that in the whole world, one cannot find, going strictly to work, above some dozen, or baker's dozen, and those chiefly of very ancient date? Lamentable; yet, after what we have just seen, accountable. Another question might be asked: How comes it that in England we have simply one good Biography, this *Boswell's Johnson;* and of good, indifferent, or even bad attempts at Biography, fewer than any civilised people? Consider the French and Germans, with their Moreris, Bayles, Jördenses, Jöchers, their innumerable *Mémoires*, and *Schilderungen*, and *Biographies Universelles;* not to speak of Rousseaus, Goethes, Schubarts, Jung-Stillings: and then contrast with these our poor Birches and Kippises and Pecks; the whole breed of whom, moreover, is now extinct!

With this question, as the answer might lead us far, and come out unflattering to patriotic sentiment, we shall not intermeddle; but turn rather, with great pleasure, to the fact, that one excellent Biography *is* actually English;—and even now lies, in Five new Volumes, at our hand, soliciting a new consideration from us; such as, age after age (the Perennial showing ever new phases as *our* position alters), it may long be profitable to bestow on it;—to which task we here, in this position, in this age, gladly address ourselves.

First, however, let the foolish April-fool Day pass by; and our Reader, during these twenty-nine days of uncertain weather that will follow, keep pondering, according to convenience, the purport of BIOGRAPHY in general: then, with the blessed dew of May-day, and in unlimited convenience of space, shall all that we have written on *Johnson* and *Boswell's Johnson* and *Croker's Boswell's Johnson* be faithfully laid before him.

BOSWELL'S LIFE OF JOHNSON.

BOSWELL'S LIFE OF JOHNSON.[1]

[1832.]

ɔOP'S Fly, sitting on the axle of the chariot, has been much
ed at for exclaiming: What a dust I do raise! Yet which
, in his way, has not sometimes been guilty of the like?
so foolish are men, they often, standing at ease and as
ıtors on the highway, will volunteer to exclaim of the Fly
being tempted to it, as *he* was) exactly to the same purport:
; a dust *thou* dost raise! Smallest of mortals, when mounted
by circumstances, come to seem great; smallest of phenomena
ɛcted with them are treated as important, and must be
ously scanned, and commented upon with loud emphasis.
at Mr. Croker should undertake to edit *Boswell's Life of*
ɔn, was a praiseworthy but no miraculous proc dure: neither
. the accomplishment of such undertaking be, in an epoch
ɔurs, anywise regarded as an event in Universal History; the
, or the wrong accomplishment thereof was, in very truth,
f the most insignificant of things. However, it sat in a great
onment, on the axle of a high, fast-rolling, parliamentary
ot; and all the world has exclaimed over it, and the author of
What a dust thou dost raise! List to the Reviews, and
ans of Public Opinion,' from the *National Omnibus* upwards:
isms, vituperative and laudatory, stream from their thousand
.ts of brass and of leather; here chanting *Io-pæans;* there
ng harsh thunder or vehement shrewmouse squeaklets; till
eneral ear is filled, and nigh deafened. Boswell's Book had
iseless birth, compared with this Edition of Boswell's Book.
he other hand, consider with what degree of tumult *Paradise*
and the *Iliad* were ushered in!

[1] RASER'S MAGAZINE, No. 28.—*The Life of Samuel Johnson, L.L.D.; ling a Tour to the Hebrides.* By James Boswell, Esq.—A new Edition, numerous Additions and Notes, by John Wilson Croker, LL.D., F.R.S. ɜ. London, 1831.

To swell such clamour, or prolong it beyond the time, seems nowise our vocation here. At most, perhaps, we are bound to inform simple readers, with all possible brevity, what manner of performance and Edition this is; especially, whether, in our poor judgment, it is worth laying out three pounds sterling upon, yea or not. The whole business belongs distinctly to the lower ranks of the trivial class.

Let us admit, then, with great readiness, that as Johnson once said, and the Editor repeats, 'all works which describe manners require notes in sixty or seventy years, or less;' that, accordingly, a new Edition of Boswell was desirable; and that Mr. Croker has given one. For this task he had various qualifications: his own voluntary resolution to do it; his high place in society, unlocking all manner of archives to him; not less, perhaps, a certain anecdotico-biographic turn of mind, natural or acquired; we mean, a love for the *minuter* events of History, and talent for investigating these. Let us admit too, that he has been very diligent; seems to have made inquiries perseveringly far and near; as well as drawn freely from his own ample stores; and so tells us, to appearance quite accurately, much that he has not found lying on the highways, but has had to seek and dig for. Numerous persons, chiefly of quality, rise to view in these Notes; when and also where they came into this world, received office or promotion, died and were buried (only what they *did*, except digest, remaining often too mysterious),—is faithfully enough set down. Whereby all that their various and doubtless widely-scattered Tombstones could have taught us, is here presented, at once, in a bound Book. Thus is an indubitable conquest, though a small one, gained over our great enemy, the all-destroyer Time; and as such shall have welcome.

Nay, let us say that the spirit of Diligence, exhibited in this department, seems to attend the Editor honestly throughout: he keeps everywhere a watchful outlook on his Text; reconciling the distant with the present, or at least indicating and regretting their irreconcilability; elucidating, smoothing down; in all ways exercising, according to ability, a strict editorial superintendence. Any little Latin or even Greek phrase is rendered into English, in general with perfect accuracy; citations are verified, or else corrected. On all hands, moreover, there is a certain spirit of Decency maintained and insisted on: if not good morals, yet good manners, are rigidly inculcated; if not Religion, and a devout

Christian heart, yet Orthodoxy, and a cleanly Shovel-hatted look, —which, as compared with flat Nothing, is something very considerable. Grant too, as no contemptible triumph of this latter spirit, that though the Editor is known as a decided Politician and Party-man, he has carefully subdued all temptations to transgress in that way: except by quite involuntary indications, and rather as it were the pervading temper of the whole, you could not discover on which side of the Political Warfare he is enlisted and fights. This, as we said, is a great triumph of the Decency-principle: for this, and for these other graces and performances, let the Editor have all praise.

Herewith, however, must the praise unfortunately terminate. Diligence, Fidelity, Decency, are good and indispensable: yet, without Faculty, without Light, they will not do the work. Along with that Tombstone-information, perhaps even without much of it, we could have liked to gain some answer, in one way or other, to this wide question: What and how was *English Life* in Johnson's time; wherein has ours grown to differ therefrom? In other words: What things have we to forget, what to fancy and remember, before we, from such distance, can put ourselves in Johnson's *place;* and so, in the full sense of the term, *understand* him, his sayings and his doings? This was indeed specially the problem which a Commentator and Editor had to solve: a complete solution of it should have lain in him, his whole mind should have been filled and prepared with perfect insight into it; then, whether in the way of express Dissertation, of incidental Exposition and Indication, opportunities enough would have occurred of bringing out the same: what was dark in the figure of the Past had thereby been enlightened; Boswell had, not in show and word only, but in very fact, been made *new* again, readable to us who are divided from him, even as he was to those close at hand. Of all which very little has been attempted here; accomplished, we should say, next to nothing, or altogether nothing.

Excuse, no doubt, is in readiness for such omission; and, indeed, for innumerable other failings;—as where, for example, the Editor will punctually explain what is already sun-clear; and then anon, not without frankness, declare frequently enough that 'the Editor does not understand,' that 'the Editor cannot guess,'—while, for most part, the Reader cannot help both guessing and seeing. Thus, if Johnson say, in one sentence, that 'English names should not be used in Latin verses;' and then, in the next sentence, speak

blamingly of 'Carteret being used as a dactyl,' will the generality of mortals detect any puzzle there? Or again, where poor Boswell writes: 'I always remember a remark made to me by a Turkish 'lady, educated in France: "*Ma foi, monsieur, notre bonheur dépend* '*de la façon que notre sang circule;*"'—though the Turkish lady here speaks English-French, where is the call for a Note like this: 'Mr. Boswell no doubt fancied these words had some meaning, or 'he would hardly have quoted them: but what that meaning is, 'the Editor cannot guess'? The Editor is clearly no witch at a riddle.—For these and all kindred deficiencies the excuse, as we said, is at hand; but the fact of their existence is not the less certain and regrettable.

Indeed it, from a very early stage of the business, becomes afflictively apparent, how much the Editor, so well furnished with all external appliances and means, is from within unfurnished with means for forming to himself any just notion of Johnson, or of Johnson's Life; and therefore of speaking on that subject with much hope of edifying. Too lightly is it from the first taken for granted that *Hunger*, the great basis of our life, is also its apex and ultimate perfection; that as 'Neediness and Greediness and Vainglory' are the chief qualities of most men, so no man, not even a Johnson, acts or can think of acting on any other principle. Whatsoever, therefore, cannot be referred to the two former categories (Need and Greed), is without scruple ranged under the latter. It is here properly that our Editor becomes burdensome; and, to the weaker sort, even a nuisance. "What good is it," will such cry, "when we had still some faint shadow of belief that man was better than a selfish Digesting-machine, what good is it to poke in, at every turn, and explain how this and that which we thought noble in old Samuel, was vulgar, base; that for him too there was no reality but in the Stomach; and except Pudding, and the finer species of pudding which is named Praise, life had no pabulum? Why, for instance, when we know that Johnson *loved* his good Wife, and says expressly that their marriage was 'a love-match on both sides,'—should two closed lips open to tell us only this: 'Is it not possible that the obvious advantage of having 'a woman of experience to superintend an establishment of this kind '(the Edial School) may have contributed to a match so disproportionate in point of age?—ED.'? Or again when, in the Text, the honest cynic speaks freely of his former poverty, and it is known that he once lived on fourpence-halfpenny a-day,—need

a Commentator advance, and comment thus: 'When we find Dr. 'Johnson tell unpleasant truths to, or of, other men, let us recollect 'that he does not appear to have spared himself, on occasions in 'which he might be forgiven for doing so'? Why in short," continues the exasperated Reader, "should Notes of this species "stand affronting me, when there might have been no Note at "all?"—Gentle Reader, we answer, Be not wroth. What other could an honest Commentator do, than give thee the best he had? Such was the picture and theorem he had fashioned for himself of the world and of man's doings therein: take it, and draw wise inferences from it. If there did exist a Leader of Public Opinion, and Champion of Orthodoxy in the Church of Jesus of Nazareth, who reckoned that man's glory consisted in not being poor; and that a Sage, and Prophet of his time, must needs blush because the world had paid him at that easy rate of fourpence-halfpenny *per diem*,—was not the fact of such existence worth knowing, worth considering?

Of a much milder hue, yet to us practically of an all-defacing, and for the present enterprise quite ruinous character,—is another grand fundamental failing; the last we shall feel ourselves obliged to take the pain of specifying here. It is, that our Editor has fatally, and almost surprisingly, mistaken the limits of an Editor's function; and so, instead of working on the margin with his Pen, to elucidate as best might be, strikes boldly into the body of the page with his Scissors, and there clips at discretion! Four Books Mr. C. had by him, wherefrom to gather light for the fifth, which was Boswell's. What does he do but now, in the placidest manner, —slit the whole five into slips, and sew these together into a *sextum quid*, exactly at his own convenience; giving Boswell the credit of the whole! By what art-magic, our readers ask, has he united them? By the simplest of all: by Brackets. Never before was the full virtue of the Bracket made manifest. You begin a sentence under Boswell's guidance, thinking to be carried happily through it by the same: but no; in the middle, perhaps after your semicolon, and some consequent 'for,'—starts up one of these Bracket-ligatures, and stitches you in from half a page to twenty or thirty pages of a Hawkins, Tyers, Murphy, Piozzi; so that often one must make the old sad reflection, Where we are, we know; whither we are going, no man knoweth! It is truly said also, There is much between the cup and the lip; but here the case is still sadder: for not till after consideration can you ascertain, now

when the cup is *at* the lip, what liquor it is you are imbibing; whether Boswell's French wine which you began with, or some Piozzi's ginger-beer, or Hawkins's entire, or perhaps some other great Brewer's penny-swipes or even alegar, which has been surreptitiously substituted instead thereof. A situation almost original; not to be tried a second time! But, in fine, what ideas Mr. Croker entertains of a literary *whole* and the thing called *Book*, and how the very Printer's Devils did not rise in mutiny against such a conglomeration as this, and refuse to print it,—may remain a problem.

And now happily our say is said. All faults, the Moralists tell us, are properly *shortcomings;* crimes themselves are nothing other than a *not doing enough;* a *fighting*, but with defective vigour. How much more a mere insufficiency, and this after good efforts, in handicraft practice! Mr. Croker says: 'The worst that can 'happen is that all the present Editor has contributed may, if the 'reader so pleases, be rejected as *surplusage.*' It is our pleasant duty to take with hearty welcome what he has given; and render thanks even for what he meant to give. Next and finally, it is our painful duty to declare, aloud if that be necessary, that his gift, as weighed against the hard money which the Booksellers demand for giving it you, is (in our judgment) very greatly the lighter. No portion, accordingly, of our small floating capital has been embarked in the business, or shall ever be; indeed, were we in the market for such a thing, there is simply *no* Edition of *Boswell* to which this last would seem preferable. And now enough, and more than enough!

We have next a word to say of James Boswell. Boswell has already been much commented upon; but rather in the way of censure and vituperation than of true recognition. He was a man that brought himself much before the world; confessed that he eagerly coveted fame, or if that were not possible, notoriety; of which latter as he gained far more than seemed his due, the public were incited, not only by their natural love of scandal, but by a special ground of envy, to say whatever ill of him could be said. Out of the fifteen millions that then lived, and had bed and board, in the British Islands, this man has provided us a greater *pleasure* than any other individual, at whose cost we now enjoy ourselves; perhaps has done us a greater *service* than can be specially attributed to more than two or three: yet, ungrateful that we are,

no written or spoken eulogy of James Boswell anywhere exists; his recompense in solid pudding (so far as copyright went) was not excessive; and as for the empty praise, it has altogether been denied him. Men are unwiser than children; they do *not* know the hand that feeds them.

Boswell was a person whose mean or bad qualities lay open to the general eye; visible, palpable to the dullest. His good qualities, again, belonged not to the Time he lived in; were far from common then; indeed, in such a degree, were almost unexampled; not recognisable therefore by every one; nay, apt even (so strange had they grown) to be confounded with the very vices they lay contiguous to, and had sprung out of. That he was a wine-bibber and gross liver; gluttonously fond of whatever would yield him a little solacement, were it only of a stomachic character, is undeniable enough. That he was vain, heedless, a babbler; had much of the sycophant, alternating with the braggadocio, curiously spiced too with an all-pervading dash of the coxcomb; that he gloried much when the Tailor, by a court-suit, had made a new man of him; that he appeared at the Shakspeare Jubilee with a riband, imprinted 'CORSICA BOSWELL,' round his hat; and in short, if you will, lived no day of his life without doing and saying more than one pretentious ineptitude: all this unhappily is evident as the sun at noon. The very look of Boswell seems to have signified so much. In that cocked nose, cocked partly in triumph over his weaker fellow-creatures, partly to snuff-up the smell of coming pleasure, and scent it from afar; in those bag-cheeks, hanging like half-filled wine-skins, still able to contain more; in that coarsely-protruded shelf-mouth, that fat dewlapped-chin; in all this, who sees not sensuality, pretension, boisterous imbecility enough; much that could not have been ornamental in the temper of a great man's overfed great man (what the Scotch name *flunky*), though it had been more natural there? The under part of Boswell's face is of a low, almost brutish character.

Unfortunately, on the other hand, what great and genuine good lay in him was nowise so self-evident. That Boswell was a hunter after spiritual Notabilities, that he loved such, and longed, and even crept and crawled to be near them; that he first (in old Touchwood Auchinleck's phraseology) "took on with Paoli;" and then being off with "the Corsican land-louper," took on with a schoolmaster, "ane that keeped a schule, and ca'd it an academy:" that he did all this, and could not help doing it, we account a very

singular merit. The man, once for all, had an 'open sense,' an open loving heart, which so few have: where Excellence existed, he was compelled to acknowledge it; was drawn towards it, and (let the old sulphur-brand of a Laird say what he liked) *could not but* walk with it,—if not as superior, if not as equal, then as inferior and lackey, better so than not at all. If we reflect now that this love of Excellence had not only such an evil *nature* to triumph over; but also what an *education* and social position withstood it and weighed it down, its innate strength, victorious over all these things, may astonish us. Consider what an inward impulse there must have been, how many mountains of impediment hurled aside, before the Scottish Laird could, as humble servant, embrace the knees (the bosom was not permitted him) of the English Dominie! Your Scottish Laird, says an English naturalist of these days, may be defined as the hungriest and vainest of all bipeds yet known. Boswell too was a Tory; of quite peculiarly feudal, genealogical, pragmatical temper; had been nurtured in an atmosphere of Heraldry, at the feet of a very Gamaliel in that kind; within bare walls, adorned only with pedigrees, amid serving-men in threadbare livery; all things teaching him, from birth upwards, to remember that a Laird was a Laird. Perhaps there was a special vanity in his very blood: old Auchinleck had, if not the gay, tail-spreading, peacock vanity of his son, no little of the slow-stalking, contentious, hissing vanity of the gander; a still more fatal species. Scottish Advocates will yet tell you how the ancient man, having chanced to be the first sheriff appointed (after the abolition of 'hereditary jurisdictions') by royal authority, was wont, in dull-snuffling pompous tone, to preface many a deliverance from the bench with these words: "I, the first King's Sheriff in Scotland."

And now behold the worthy Bozzy, so prepossessed and held back by nature and by art, fly nevertheless like iron to its magnet, whither his better genius called! You may surround the iron and the magnet with what enclosures and encumbrances you please,—with wood, with rubbish, with brass: it matters not, the two feel each other, they struggle restlessly towards each other, they *will* be together. The iron may be a Scottish squirelet, full of gulosity and 'gigmanity;'[2] the magnet an English plebeian, and moving rag-and-dust mountain, coarse, proud, irascible, imperious: never-

[2] '*Q.* What do you mean by "respectable"?—*A.* He always kept a gig.' (*Thurtell's Trial.*)—'Thus,' it has been said, 'does society naturally divide itself into four classes: Noblemen, Gentlemen, Gigmen and Men.'

theless, behold how they embrace, and inseparably cleave to one another! It is one of the strangest phenomena of the past century, that at a time when the old reverent feeling of Discipleship (such as brought men from far countries, with rich gifts, and prostrate soul, to the feet of the Prophets) had passed utterly away from men's practical experience, and was no longer surmised to exist (as it does), perennial, indestructible, in man's inmost heart,—James Boswell should have been the individual, of all others, predestined to recall it, in such singular guise, to the wondering, and, for a long while, laughing and unrecognising world. It has been commonly said, The man's vulgar vanity was all that attached him to Johnson; he delighted to be seen near him, to be thought connected with him. Now let it be at once granted that no consideration springing out of vulgar vanity could well be absent from the mind of James Boswell, in this his intercourse with Johnson, or in any considerable transaction of his life. At the same time, ask yourself: Whether such vanity, and nothing else, actuated him therein; whether this was the true essence and moving principle of the phenomenon, or not rather its outward vesture, and the accidental environment (and defacement) in which it came to light? The man was, by nature and habit, vain; a sycophant-coxcomb, be it granted: but had there been nothing more than vanity in him, was Samuel Johnson the man of men to whom he must attach himself? At the date when Johnson was a poor rusty-coated 'scholar,' dwelling in Temple-lane, and indeed throughout their whole intercourse afterwards, were there not chancellors and prime ministers enough; graceful gentlemen, the glass of fashion; honour-giving noblemen; dinner-giving rich men; renowned fire-eaters, swordsmen, gownsmen; Quacks and Realities of all hues,—any one of whom bulked much larger in the world's eye than Johnson ever did? To any one of whom, by half that submissiveness and assiduity, our Bozzy might have recommended himself; and sat there, the envy of surrounding lickspittles; pocketing now solid emolument, swallowing now well-cooked viands and wines of rich vintage; in each case, also, shone-on by some glittering reflex of Renown or Notoriety, so as to be the observed of innumerable observers. To no one of whom, however, though otherwise a most diligent solicitor and purveyor, did he so attach himself: such vulgar courtierships were his paid drudgery, or leisure amusement; the worship of Johnson was his grand, ideal, voluntary business. Does not the frothy-hearted, yet enthusiastic man,

doffing his Advocate's-wig, regularly take post, and hurry up to London, for the sake of his Sage chiefly; as to a Feast of Tabernacles, the Sabbath of his whole year? The plate-licker and wine-bibber dives into Bolt Court, to sip muddy coffee with a cynical old man, and a sour-tempered blind old woman (feeling the cups, whether they are full, with her finger); and patiently endures contradictions without end; too happy so he may but be allowed to listen and live. Nay, it does not appear that vulgar vanity could ever have been much flattered by Boswell's relation to Johnson. Mr. Croker says, Johnson was, to the last, little regarded by the great world; from which, for a vulgar vanity, all honour, as from its fountain, descends. Bozzy, even among Johnson's friends and special admirers, seems rather to have been laughed at than envied: his officious, whisking, consequential ways, the daily reproofs and rebuffs he underwent, could gain from the world no golden but only leaden opinions. His devout Discipleship seemed nothing more than a mean Spanielship, in the general eye. His mighty 'constellation,' or sun, round whom he, as satellite, observantly gyrated, was, for the mass of men, but a huge ill-snuffed tallow-light, and he a weak night-moth, circling foolishly, dangerously about it, not knowing what he wanted. If he enjoyed Highland dinners and toasts, as henchman to a new sort of chieftain, Henry Erskine, in the domestic 'Outer-House,' could hand him a shilling "for the sight of his Bear." Doubtless the man was laughed at, and often heard himself laughed at for his Johnsonism. To be envied is the grand and sole aim of vulgar vanity; to be filled with good things is that of sensuality: for Johnson perhaps no man living *envied* poor Bozzy; and of good things (except himself paid for them) there was no vestige in that acquaintanceship. Had nothing other or better than vanity and sensuality been there, Johnson and Boswell had never come together, or had soon and finally separated again.

In fact, the so copious terrestrial dross that welters chaotically, as the outer sphere of this man's character, does but render for us more remarkable, more touching, the celestial spark of goodness, of light, and Reverence for Wisdom, which dwelt in the interior, and could struggle through such encumbrances, and in some degree illuminate and beautify them. There is much lying yet undeveloped in the love of Boswell for Johnson. A cheering proof, in a time which else utterly wanted and still wants such, that living Wisdom is quite *infinitely* precious to man, is the symbol of the Godlike to

him, which even weak eyes may discern; that Loyalty, Discipleship, all that was ever meant by *Hero-worship*, lives perennially in the human bosom, and waits, even in these dead days, only for occasions to unfold it, and inspire all men with it, and again make the world alive! James Boswell we can regard as a practical witness, or real *martyr*, to this high everlasting truth. A wonderful martyr, if you will; and in a time which made such martyrdom doubly wonderful: yet the time and its martyr perhaps suited each other. For a decrepit, death-sick Era, when CANT had first decisively opened her poison-breathing lips to proclaim that God-worship and Mammon-worship were one and the same, that Life was a *Lie*, and the Earth Beelzebub's, which the *Supreme Quack* should inherit; and so all things were fallen into the yellow leaf, and fast hastening to noisome corruption: for such an Era, perhaps no better Prophet than a parti-coloured Zany-Prophet, concealing, from himself and others, his prophetic significance in such unexpected vestures,—was deserved, or would have been in place. A precious medicine lay hidden in floods of coarsest, most composite treacle: the world swallowed the treacle, for it suited the world's palate; and now, after half a century, may the medicine also begin to show itself! James Boswell belonged, in his corruptible part, to the lowest classes of mankind; a foolish, inflated creature, swimming in an element of self-conceit: but in his corruptible there dwelt an incorruptible, all the more impressive and indubitable for the strange lodging it had taken.

Consider too, with what force, diligence and vivacity he has rendered back all this which, in Johnson's neighbourhood, his 'open sense' had so eagerly and freely taken in. That loose-flowing, careless-looking Work of his is as a picture by one of Nature's own Artists; the best possible resemblance of a Reality; like the very image thereof in a clear mirror. Which indeed it was: let but the mirror be *clear*, this is the great point; the picture must and will be genuine. How the babbling Bozzy, inspired only by love, and the recognition and vision which love can lend, epitomises nightly the words of Wisdom, the deeds and aspects of Wisdom, and so, by little and little, unconsciously works together for us a whole *Johnsoniad;* a more free, perfect, sunlit and spirit-speaking likeness than for many centuries had been drawn by man of man! Scarcely since the days of Homer has the feat been equalled; indeed, in many senses, this also is a kind of Heroic Poem. The fit *Odyssey* of our unheroic age was to be written, not sung; of a Thinker, not

of a Fighter; and (for want of a Homer) by the first open soul that might offer,—looked such even through the organs of a Boswell. We do the man's intellectual endowment great wrong, if we measure it by its mere logical outcome; though hero too, there is not wanting a light ingenuity, a figurativeness and fanciful sport, with glimpses of insight far deeper than the common. But Boswell's grand intellectual talent was, as such ever is, an *unconscious* one, of far higher reach and significance than Logic; and showed itself in the whole, not in parts. Here again we have that old saying verified, 'The heart sees farther than the head.'

Thus does poor Bozzy stand out to us as an ill-assorted, glaring mixture of the highest and the lowest. What, indeed, is man's life generally but a kind of beast-godhood; the god in us triumphing more and more over the beast; striving more and more to subdue it under his feet? Did not the Ancients, in their wise, perennially-significant way, figure Nature itself, their sacred ALL, or PAN, as a portentous commingling of these two discords; as musical, humane, oracular in its upper part, yet ending below in the cloven hairy feet of a goat? The union of melodious, celestial Freewill and Reason with foul Irrationality and Lust; in which, nevertheless, dwelt a mysterious unspeakable Fear and half-mad *panic* Awe; as for mortals there well might! And is not man a microcosm, or epitomised mirror of that same Universe; or rather, is not that Universe even Himself, the reflex of his own fearful and wonderful being, 'the waste fantasy of his own dream'? No wonder that man, that each man, and James Boswell like the others, should resemble it! The peculiarity in his case was the unusual defect of amalgamation and subordination: the highest lay side by side with the lowest; not morally combined with it and spiritually transfiguring it, but tumbling in half-mechanical juxtaposition with it, and from time to time, as the mad alternation chanced, irradiating it, or eclipsed by it.

The world, as we said, has been but unjust to him; discerning only the outer terrestrial and often sordid mass; without eye, as it generally is, for his inner divine secret; and thus figuring him nowise as a god Pan, but simply of the bestial species, like the cattle on a thousand hills. Nay, sometimes a strange enough hypothesis has been started of him; as if it were in virtue even of these same bad qualities that he did his good work; as if it were the very fact of his being among the worst men in this world that had enabled him to write one of the best books therein! Falser

hypothesis, we may venture to say, never rose in human soul. *Bad* is by its nature negative, you can do *nothing;* whatsoever enables us to *do* anything is by its very nature *good.* Alas, that there should be teachers in Israel, or even learners, to whom this world-ancient fact is still problematical, or even deniable! Boswell wrote a good Book because he had a heart and an eye to discern Wisdom, and an utterance to render it forth; because of his free insight, his lively talent, above all, of his Love and childlike Open-mindedness. His sneaking sycophancies, his greediness and forwardness, whatever was bestial and earthly in him, are so many blemishes in his Book, which still disturb us in its clearness; wholly hindrances, not helps. Towards Johnson, however, his feeling was not Sycophancy, which is the lowest, but Reverence, which is the highest of human feelings. None but a *reverent* man (which so unspeakably few are) could have found his way from Boswell's environment to Johnson's: if such worship for real God-made superiors showed itself also as worship for apparent Tailor-made superiors, even as hollow interested mouth-worship for such,—the case, in this composite human nature of ours, was not miraculous, the more was the pity! But for ourselves, let every one of us cling to this last article of Faith, and know it as the beginning of all knowledge worth the name: That neither James Boswell's good Book, nor any other good thing, in any time or in any place, was, is or can be performed by any man in virtue of his *badness,* but always and solely in spite thereof.

As for the Book itself, questionless the universal favour entertained for it is well merited. In worth as a Book we have rated it beyond any other product of the eighteenth century: all Johnson's own Writings, laborious and in their kind genuine above most, stand on a quite inferior level to it; already, indeed, they are becoming obsolete for this generation; and for some future generation may be valuable chiefly as Prolegomena and expository Scholia to this *Johnsoniad* of Boswell. Which of us but remembers, as one of the sunny spots in his existence, the day when he opened these airy volumes, fascinating him by a true natural magic! It was as if the curtains of the past were drawn aside, and we looked mysteriously into a kindred country, where dwelt our Fathers; inexpressibly dear to us, but which had seemed forever hidden from our eyes. For the dead Night had engulfed it; all was gone, vanished as if it had not been. Nevertheless, wondrously given back to us, there once more it lay; all bright, lucid, blooming; a

little island of Creation amid the circumambient Void. There it still lies; like a thing stationary, imperishable, over which changeful Time were now accumulating itself in vain, and could not, any longer, harm it, or hide it.

If we examine by what charm it is that men are still held to this *Life of Johnson*, now when so much else has been forgotten, the main part of the answer will perhaps be found in that speculation 'on the import of *Reality*,' communicated to the world, last month, in this Magazine. The *Johnsoniad* of Boswell turns on objects that in very deed existed; it is all *true*. So far other in melodiousness of tone, it vies with the *Odyssey*, or surpasses it, in this one point; to us these read pages, as those chanted hexameters were to the first Greek hearers, are, in the fullest, deepest sense, wholly *credible*. All the wit and wisdom lying embalmed in Boswell's Book, plenteous as these are, could not have saved it. Far more scientific *instruction* (mere excitement and enlightenment of the *thinking power*) can be found in twenty other works of that time which make but a quite secondary impression on us. The other works of that time, however, fall under one of two classes: Either they are professedly Didactic; and, in that way, mere Abstractions, Philosophic Diagrams, incapable of interesting us much otherwise than as *Euclid's Elements* may do: Or else, with all their vivacity, and pictorial richness of colour, *they are Fictions and not Realities*. Deep truly, as Herr Sauertieg urges, is the force of this consideration: the thing here stated is a fact; those figures, that local habitation, are not shadow but substance. In virtue of such advantages, see how a very Boswell may become Poetical!

Critics insist much on the Poet that he should communicate an 'Infinitude' to his delineation; that by intensity of conception, by that gift of 'transcendental Thought,' which is fitly named *genius*, and inspiration, he should *inform* the Finite with a certain Infinitude of significance; or as they sometimes say, ennoble the Actual into Idealness. They are right in their precept; they mean rightly. But in cases like this of the *Johnsoniad*, such is the dark grandeur of that 'Time element,' wherein man's soul here below lives imprisoned,—the Poet's task is, as it were, done to his hand: Time itself, which is the outer veil of Eternity, invests, of its own accord, with an authentic, felt 'infinitude' whatsoever it has once embraced in its mysterious folds. Consider all that lies in that one word *Past!* What a pathetic, sacred, in every sense *poetic*, meaning is implied in it; a meaning growing ever the clearer, the farther we

recede in Time,—the *more* of that same Past we have to look through!—On which ground indeed must Sauerteig have built, and not without plausibility, in that strange thesis of his: 'That 'History, after all, is the true Poetry; that Reality, if rightly 'interpreted, is grander than Fiction; nay that even in the right 'interpretation of Reality and History does genuine Poetry consist.'

Thus for *Boswell's Life of Johnson* has Time done, is Time still doing, what no ornament of Art or Artifice could have done for it. Rough Samuel and sleek wheedling James *were*, and *are not*. Their Life and whole personal Environment has melted into air. The Mitre Tavern still stands in Fleet Street: but where now is its scot-and-lot paying, beef-and-ale loving, cocked-hatted, pot-bellied Landlord; its rosy-faced assiduous Landlady, with all her shining brass-pans, waxed tables, well-filled larder-shelves; her cooks, and bootjacks, and errand-boys, and watery-mouthed hangers-on? Gone! Gone! The becking Waiter who, with wreathed smiles, was wont to spread for Samuel and Bozzy their supper of the gods, has long since pocketed his last sixpence; and vanished, sixpences and all, like a ghost at cock-crowing. The Bottles they drank out of are all broken, the Chairs they sat on all rotted and burnt; the very Knives and Forks they ate with have rusted to the heart, and become brown oxide of iron, and mingled with the indiscriminate clay. All, all has vanished; in every deed and truth, like that baseless fabric of Prospero's air-vision. Of the Mitre Tavern nothing but the bare walls remain there: of London, of England, of the World, nothing but the bare walls remain; and these also decaying (were they of adamant), only slower. The mysterious River of Existence rushes on: a new Billow thereof has arrived, and lashes wildly as ever round the old embankments; but the former Billow with *its* loud, mad eddyings, where is it?—Where!—Now this Book of Boswell's, this is precisely a revocation of the edict of Destiny; so that Time shall not utterly, not so soon by several centuries, have dominion over us. A little row of Naphtha-lamps, with its line of Naphtha-light, burns clear and holy through the dead Night of the Past: they who are gone are still here; though hidden they are revealed, though dead they yet speak. There it shines, that little miraculously lamplit Pathway; shedding its feebler and feebler twilight into the boundless dark Oblivion,—for all that our Johnson *touched* has become illuminated for us: on which miraculous little Pathway we can still travel, and see wonders.

It is not speaking with exaggeration, but with strict measured sobriety, to say that this Book of Boswell's will give us more real insight into the *History of England* during those days than twenty other Books, falsely entitled 'Histories,' which take to themselves that special aim. What good is it to me though innumerable Smolletts and Belshams keep dinning in my ears that a man named George the Third was born and bred up, and a man named George the Second died; that Walpole, and the Pelhams, and Chatham, and Rockingham, and Shelburne, and North, with their Coalition or their Separation Ministries, all ousted one another; and vehemently scrambled for 'the thing they called the Rudder 'of Government, but which was in reality the Spigot of Taxation'? That debates were held, and infinite jarring and jargoning took place; and road-bills and enclosure-bills, and game-bills and India-bills, and Laws which no man can number, which happily few men needed to trouble their heads with beyond the passing moment, were enacted, and printed by the King's Stationer? That he who sat in Chancery, and rayed-out speculation from the Woolsack, was now a man that squinted, now a man that did not squint? To the hungry and thirsty mind all this avails next to nothing. These men and these things, we indeed know, did swim, by strength or by specific levity, as apples or as horse-dung, on the top of the current: but is it by painfully noting the courses, eddyings and bobbings hither and thither of such drift-articles, that you will unfold to me the nature of the current itself; of that mighty-rolling, loud-roaring Life-current, bottomless as the foundations of the Universe, mysterious as its Author? The thing I want to see is not Redbook Lists, and Court Calendars, and Parliamentary Registers, but the LIFE OF MAN in England: what men did, thought, suffered, enjoyed; the form, especially the spirit, of their terrestrial existence, its outward environment, its inward principle; *how* and *what* it was; whence it proceeded, whither it was tending.

Mournful, in truth, is it to behold what the business called 'History,' in these so enlightened and illuminated times, still continues to be. Can you gather from it, read till your eyes go out, any dimmest shadow of an answer to that great question: How men lived and had their being; were it but economically, as, what wages they got, and what they bought with these? Unhappily you cannot. History will throw no light on any such matter. At the point where living memory fails, it is all darkness; Mr. Senior and Mr. Sadler must still debate this simplest of all elements in

he condition of the Past: Whether men were better off, in their nere larders and pantries, or were worse off than now! History, is it stands all bound up in gilt volumes, is but a shade more nstructive than the wooden volumes of a Backgammon-board. How my Prime Minister was appointed is of less moment to me than How my House Servant was hired. In these days, ten ordinary Histories of Kings and Courtiers were well exchanged against the tenth part of one good History of Booksellers.

For example, I would fain know the History of Scotland: who can tell it me? "Robertson," say innumerable voices; "Robertson against the world." I open Robertson; and find there, through long ages too confused for narrative, and fit only to be presented in the way of epitome and distilled essence, a cunning answer and hypothesis, not to this question: By whom, and by what means, when and how, was this fair broad Scotland, with its Arts and Manufactures, Temples, Schools, Institutions, Poetry, Spirit, National Character, created, and made arable, verdant, peculiar, great, here as I can see some fair section of it lying, kind and strong (like some Bacchus-tamed Lion), from the Castle-hill of Edinburgh?—but to this other question: How did the King keep himself alive in those old days; and restrain so many Butcher-Barons and ravenous Henchmen from utterly extirpating one another, so that killing went on in some sort of moderation? In the one little Letter of Æneas Sylvius, from old Scotland, there is more of History than in all this.—At length, however, we come to a luminous age, interesting enough; to the age of the Reformation. All Scotland is awakened to a second higher life: the Spirit of the Highest stirs in every bosom, agitates every bosom; Scotland is convulsed, fermenting, struggling to body itself forth anew. To the herdsman, among his cattle in remote woods; to the craftsman, in his rude, heath-thatched workshop, among his rude guild-brethren; to the great and to the little, a new light has arisen: in town and hamlet groups are gathered, with eloquent looks, and governed or ungovernable tongues; the great and the little go forth together to do battle for the Lord against the mighty. We ask, with breathless eagerness: How was it; how went it on? Let us understand it, let us see it, and know it!—In reply, is handed us a really graceful and most dainty little Scandalous Chronicle (as for some Journal of Fashion) of two persons: Mary Stuart, a Beauty, but over light-headed; and Henry Darnly, a Booby who had fine legs. How these first courted, billed and cooed, according

to nature; then pouted, fretted, grew utterly enraged, and blew one another up with gunpowder: this, and not the History of Scotland, is what we goodnaturedly read. Nay, by other hands, something like a horse-load of other Books have been written to prove that it was the Beauty who blew up the Booby, and that it was not she. Who or what it was, the thing once for all *being* so effectually done, concerns us little. To know Scotland, at that great epoch, were a valuable increase of knowledge: to know poor Darnley, and see him with burning candle, from centre to skin, were no increase of knowledge at all.—Thus is History written.

Hence, indeed, comes it that History, which should be 'the essence of innumerable Biographies,' will tell us, question it as we like, less than one genuine Biography may do, pleasantly and of its own accord! The time is approaching when History will be attempted on quite other principles; when the Court, the Senate and the Battlefield, receding more and more into the background, the Temple, the Workshop and Social Hearth will advance more and more into the foreground; and History will not content itself with shaping some answer to that question: How were men *taxed* and *kept quiet* then? but will seek to answer this other infinitely wider and higher question: How and what *were men* then? Not our Government only, or the '*House* wherein our life was led,' but the *Life* itself we led there, will be inquired into. Of which latter it may be found that Government, in any modern sense of the word, is after all but a secondary condition: in the mere sense of *Taxation* and *Keeping quiet*, a small, almost a pitiful one.—Meanwhile let us welcome such Boswells, each in his degree, as bring us any genuine contribution, were it never so inadequate, so inconsiderable.

An exception was early taken against this *Life of Johnson*, and all similar enterprises, which we here recommend; and has been transmitted from critic to critic, and repeated in their several dialects, uninterruptedly, ever since: That such jottings-down of careless conversation are an infringement of social privacy; a crime against our highest Freedom, the Freedom of man's intercourse with man. To this accusation, which we have read and heard oftener than enough, might it not be well for once to offer the flattest contradiction, and plea of *Not at all guilty?* Not that conversation is noted down, but that conversation should not deserve noting down, is the evil. Doubtless, if conversation be falsely recorded, then is it simply a Lie; and worthy of being

swept, with all despatch, to the Father of Lies. But if, on the other hand, conversation can be authentically recorded, and any one is ready for the task, let him by all means proceed with it; let conversation be kept in remembrance to the latest date possible. Nay, should the consciousness that a man may be among us 'taking notes' tend, in any measure, to restrict those floods of idle insincere *speech*, with which the *thought* of mankind is wellnigh drowned,—were it other than the most indubitable benefit? He who speaks honestly cares not, needs not care, though his words be preserved to remotest time: for him who speaks *dis*honestly, the fittest of all punishments seems to be this same, which the nature of the case provides. The dishonest speaker, not he only who purposely utters falsehoods, but he who does not purposely, and with sincere heart, utter Truth, and Truth alone; who babbles he knows not what, and has clapped no bridle on his tongue, but lets it run racket, ejecting chatter and futility,—is among the most indisputable malefactors omitted, or inserted, in the Criminal Calendar. To him that will well consider it, idle speaking is precisely the beginning of all Hollowness, Halfness, *Infidelity* (want of Faithfulness); the genial atmosphere in which rank weeds of every kind attain the mastery over noble fruits in man's life, and utterly choke them out: one of the most crying maladies of these days, and to be testified against, and in all ways to the uttermost withstood. Wise, of a wisdom far beyond our shallow depth, was that old precept: *Watch thy tongue;* out of it are the issues of Life! 'Man is properly an *incarnated word:*' the *word* that he speaks is the *man* himself. Were eyes put into our head, that we might *see;* or only that we might fancy, and plausibly pretend, we had *seen?* Was the tongue suspended there, that it might tell truly what we had seen, and make man the soul's-brother of man; or only that it might utter vain sounds, jargon, soul-confusing, and so *divide* man, as by enchanted walls of Darkness, from union with man? Thou who wearest that cunning, heaven-made organ, a Tongue, think well of this. Speak not, I passionately entreat thee, till thy thought hath silently matured itself, till thou have other than mad and mad-making noises to emit: *hold thy tongue* (thou hast it a-holding) till *some* meaning lie behind, to set it wagging. Consider the significance of SILENCE: it is boundless, never by meditating to be exhausted; unspeakably profitable to thee! Cease that chaotic hubbub, wherein thy own soul runs to waste, to confused suicidal dislo-

cation and stupor: out of Silence comes thy strength. 'Speech is silvern, Silence is golden; Speech is human, Silence is divine.' Fool! thinkest thou that because no Boswell is there with ass-skin and blacklead to note thy jargon, it therefore dies and is harmless? Nothing dies, nothing can die. No idlest word thou speakest but is a seed cast into Time, and grows through all Eternity! The Recording Angel, consider it well, is no fable, but the truest of truths: the paper tablets thou canst burn; of the 'iron leaf' there is no burning.—Truly, if we can permit God Almighty to note down our conversation, thinking it good enough for Him,—any poor Boswell need not scruple to work his will of it.

Leaving now this our English *Odyssey*, with its Singer and Scholiast, let us come to the *Ulysses;* that great Samuel Johnson himself, the far-experienced, 'much-enduring man,' whose labours and pilgrimage are here sung. A full-length image of his Existence has been preserved for us: and he, perhaps of all living Englishmen, was the one who best deserved that honour. For if it is true, and now almost proverbial, that 'the Life of the lowest 'mortal, if faithfully recorded, would be interesting to the highest;' how much more when the mortal in question was already distinguished in fortune and natural quality, so that his thinkings and doings were not significant of himself only, but of large masses of mankind! 'There is not a man whom I meet on the streets,' says one, 'but I could like, were it otherwise convenient, to know his 'Biography:' nevertheless, could an enlightened curiosity be so far gratified, it must be owned the Biography of most ought to be, in an extreme degree, *summary*. In this world, there is so wonderfully little self-subsistence among men; next to no originality (though never absolutely *none*): one Life is too servilely the copy of another; and so in whole thousands of them you find little that is properly new; nothing but the old song sung by a new voice, with better or worse execution, here and there an ornamental quaver, and false notes enough: but the fundamental tune is ever the same; and for the *words*, these, all that they meant stands written generally on the Churchyard-stone: *Natus sum; esuriebam, quærebam; nunc repletus requiesco.* Mankind sail their Life-voyage in huge fleets, following some single whale-fishing or herring-fishing Commodore: the log-book of each differs not, in essential purport, from that of any other: nay the most have no legible log-book

reflection, observation not being among their talents); keep no reckoning, only *keep in sight* of the flagship,—and fish. Read the Commodore's Papers (know *his* Life); and even your lover of that street Biography will have learned the most of what he sought after.

Or, the servile *imitancy*, and yet also a nobler relationship and mysterious union to one another which lies in such imitancy, of Mankind might be illustrated under the different figure, itself nowise *original*, of a Flock of Sheep. Sheep go in flocks for three reasons: First, because they are of a gregarious temper, and *love* to be together: Secondly, because of their cowardice; they are afraid to be left alone: Thirdly, because the common run of them are dull of sight, to a proverb, and can have no choice in roads; sheep can in fact *see* nothing; in a celestial Luminary, and a scoured pewter Tankard, would discern only that both dazzled them, and were of unspeakable glory. How like their fellow-creatures of the human species! Men too, as was from the first maintained here, are gregarious; then surely faint-hearted enough, trembling to be left by themselves; above all, dull-sighted, down to the verge of utter blindness. Thus are we seen ever running in torrents, and mobs, if we run at all; and after what foolish scoured Tankards, mistaking them for Suns! Foolish Turnip-lanterns likewise, to all appearance supernatural, keep whole nations quaking, their hair on end. Neither know we, except by blind habit, where the good pastures lie: solely when the sweet grass is between our teeth, we know it, and chew it; also when grass is bitter and scant, we know it,—and bleat and butt: these last two facts we know of a truth and in very deed. Thus do Men and Sheep play their parts on this Nether Earth; wandering restlessly in large masses, they know not whither; for most part, each following his neighbour, and his own nose.

Nevertheless, not always; look better, you shall find certain that do, in some small degree, *know whither*. Sheep have their Bell-wether; some ram of the folds, endued with more valour, with clearer vision than other sheep; he leads them through the wolds, by height and hollow, to the woods and water-courses, for covert or for pleasant provender; courageously marching, and if need be leaping, and with hoof and horn doing battle, in the van: him they courageously and with assured heart follow. Touching it is, as every herdsman will inform you, with what chivalrous devotedness these woolly Hosts adhere to their Wether; and rush

after him, through good report and through bad report, were it into safe shelters and green thymy nooks, or into asphaltic lakes and the jaws of devouring lions. Ever also must we recall that fact which we owe Jean Paul's quick eye: 'If you hold a stick 'before the Wether, so that he, by necessity, leaps in passing you, 'and then withdraw your stick, the Flock will nevertheless all leap 'as he did; and the thousandth sheep shall be found impetuously 'vaulting over air, as the first did over an otherwise impassable 'barrier.' Reader, wouldst thou understand Society, ponder well those ovine proceedings; thou wilt find them all curiously significant.

Now if sheep always, how much more must men always, have their Chief, their Guide! Man too is by nature quite thoroughly *gregarious:* nay ever he struggles to be something more, to be *social;* not even when Society has become impossible, does that deep-seated tendency and effort forsake him. Man, as if by miraculous magic, imparts his Thoughts, his Mood of mind to man; an unspeakable communion binds all past, present and future men into one indissoluble whole, almost into one living individual. Of which high, mysterious Truth, this disposition to *imitate*, to lead and be led, this impossibility *not* to imitate, is the most constant, and one of the simplest manifestations. To imitate! which of us all can measure the significance that lies in that one word? By virtue of which the infant Man, born at Woolsthorpe, grows up not to be a hairy Savage, and chewer of Acorns, but an Isaac Newton and Discoverer of Solar Systems!—Thus both in a celestial and terrestrial sense are we a *Flock*, such as there is no other: nay looking away from the base and ludicrous to the sublime and sacred side of the matter (since in every matter there are two sides), have not we also a SHEPHERD, 'if we will but hear his voice'? Of those stupid multitudes there is no one but has an immortal Soul within him; a reflex and living image of God's whole Universe: strangely, from its dim environment, the light of the Highest looks through him;—for which reason, indeed, it is that we claim a brotherhood with him, and so love to know his History, and come into clearer and clearer union with all that he feels, and says, and does.

However, the chief thing to be noted was this: Amid those dull millions, who, as a dull flock, roll hither and thither, whithersoever they are led; and seem all sightless and slavish, accomplishing, attempting little save what the animal instinct in its somewhat higher kind might teach, To keep themselves and their young ones

alive,—are scattered here and there superior natures, whose eye is not destitute of free vision, nor their heart of free volition. These latter, therefore, examine and determine, not what others do, but what it is right to do; towards which, and which only, will they, with such force as is given them, resolutely endeavour: for if the Machine, living or inanimate, is merely *fed*, or desires to be fed, and so *works;* the Person can *will*, and so *do*. These are properly our Men, our Great Men; the guides of the dull host,—which follows them as by an irrevocable decree. They are the chosen of the world: they had this rare faculty not only of 'supposing' and 'inclining to think,' but of *knowing* and *believing;* the nature of their being was, that they lived not by Hearsay, but by clear Vision; while others hovered and swam along, in the grand Vanity-fair of the World, blinded by the mere Shows of things, these saw into the Things themselves, and could walk as men having an eternal loadstar, and with their feet on sure paths. Thus was there a *Reality* in their existence; something of a perennial character; in virtue of which indeed it is that the memory of them is perennial. Whoso belongs only to his own age, and reverences only *its* gilt Popinjays or soot-smeared Mumbojumbos, must needs die with it: though he have been crowned seven times in the Capitol, or seventy-and-seven times, and Rumour have blown his praises to all the four winds, deafening every ear therewith,—it avails not; there was nothing universal, nothing eternal in him; he must fade away, even as the Popinjay-gildings and Scarecrow-apparel, which he could not see through. The great man does, in good truth, belong to his own age; nay more so than any other man; being properly the synopsis and epitome of such age with its interests and influences: but belongs likewise to all ages, otherwise he is not great. What was transitory in him passes away; and an immortal part remains, the significance of which is in strict speech inexhaustible,—as that of every *real* object is. Aloft, conspicuous, on his enduring basis, he stands there, serene, unaltering; silently addresses to every new generation a new lesson and monition. Well is his Life worth writing, worth interpreting; and ever, in the new dialect of new times, of re-writing and re-interpreting.

Of such chosen men was Samuel Johnson: not ranking among the highest, or even the high, yet distinctly admitted into that sacred band; whose existence was no idle Dream, but a Reality which he transacted *awake;* nowise a Clothes-horse and Patent

Digester, but a genuine Man. By nature he was gifted for the noblest of earthly tasks, that of Priesthood, and Guidance of mankind; by destiny, moreover, he was appointed to this task, and did actually, according to strength, fulfil the same: so that always the question, *How; in what spirit; under what shape?* remains for us to be asked and answered concerning him. For as the highest Gospel was a Biography, so is the Life of every good man still an indubitable Gospel, and preaches to the eye and heart and whole man, so that Devils even must believe and tremble, these gladdest tidings: "Man is heaven-born; not the thrall of Circumstances, of Necessity, but the victorious subduer thereof: behold how he can become the 'Announcer of himself and of his Freedom;' and is ever what the Thinker has named him, 'the Messias of Nature.'" —Yes, Reader, all this that thou hast so often heard about 'force of circumstances,' 'the creature of the time,' 'balancing of motives,' and who knows what melancholy stuff to the like purport, wherein thou, as in a nightmare Dream, sittest paralysed, and hast no force left,—was in very truth, if Johnson and waking men are to be credited, little other than a hag-ridden vision of death-sleep; some *half*-fact, more fatal at times than a whole falsehood. Shake it off; awake; up and be doing, even as it is given thee!

The Contradiction which yawns wide enough in every Life, which it is the meaning and task of Life to reconcile, was in Johnson's wider than in most. Seldom, for any man, has the contrast between the ethereal heavenward side of things, and the dark sordid earthward, been more glaring: whether we look at Nature's work with him or Fortune's, from first to last, heterogeneity, as of sunbeams and miry clay, is on all hands manifest. Whereby indeed, only this was declared, That *much Life* had been given him; many things to triumph over, a great work to *do*. Happily also he did it; better than the most.

Nature had given him a high, keen-visioned, almost poetic soul; yet withal imprisoned it in an inert, unsightly body: he that could never rest had not limbs that would move with him, but only roll and waddle: the inward eye, all-penetrating, all-embracing, must look through bodily windows that were dim, half-blinded; he so loved men, and 'never once *saw* the human face divine'! Not less did he prize the love of men; he was eminently social; the approbation of his fellows was dear to him, 'valuable,' as he owned, 'if from the meanest of human beings:' yet the first impression he produced on every man was to be one of aversion, almost of disgust.

By Nature it was farther ordered that the imperious Johnson should be born poor: the ruler-soul, strong in its native royalty, generous, uncontrollable, like the lion of the woods, was to be housed, then, in such a dwelling-place: of Disfigurement, Disease, and lastly of a Poverty which itself made him the servant of servants. Thus was the born king likewise a born slave: the divine spirit of Music must awake imprisoned amid dull-croaking universal Discords; the Ariel finds himself encased in the coarse hulls of a Caliban. So is it more or less, we know (and thou, O Reader, knowest and feelest even now), with all men: yet with the fewest men in any such degree as with Johnson.

Fortune, moreover, which had so managed his first appearance in the world, lets not her hand lie idle, or turn the other way, but works unweariedly in the same spirit, while he is journeying through the world. What such a mind, stamped of Nature's noblest metal, though in so ungainly a die, was specially and best of all fitted for, might still be a question. To none of the world's few Incorporated Guilds could he have adjusted himself without difficulty, without distortion; in none been a Guild-Brother well at ease. Perhaps, if we look to the strictly practical nature of his faculty, to the strength, decision, method that manifests itself in him, we may say that his calling was rather towards Active than Speculative life; that as Statesman (in the higher, now obsolete sense), Lawgiver, Ruler, in short as Doer of the Work, he had shone even more than as Speaker of the Word. His honesty of heart, his courageous temper, the value he set on things outward and material, might have made him a King among Kings. Had the golden age of those new French Prophets, when it shall be *à chacun selon sa capacité, à chaque capacité selon ses œuvres*, but arrived! Indeed even in our brazen and Birmingham-lacquer age, he himself regretted that he had not become a Lawyer, and risen to be Chancellor, which he might well have done. However, it was otherwise appointed. To no man does Fortune throw open all the kingdoms of this world, and say: It is thine; choose where thou wilt dwell! To the most she opens hardly the smallest cranny or doghutch, and says, not without asperity: There, that is thine while thou canst keep it; nestle thyself there, and bless Heaven! Alas, men must fit themselves into many things: some forty years ago, for instance, the noblest and ablest Man in all the British lands might be seen not swaying the royal sceptre, or the pontiff's censer, on the pinnacle of the World, but gauging ale-tubs in the

little burgh of Dumfries! Johnson came a little nearer the mark than Burns: but with him too 'Strength was mournfully denied its arena;' he too had to fight Fortune at strange odds, all his life long.

Johnson's disposition for *royalty* (had the Fates so ordered it) is well seen in early boyhood. 'His favourites,' says Boswell, 'used 'to receive very liberal assistance from him; and such was the 'submission and deference with which he was treated, that three of 'the boys, of whom Mr. Hector was sometimes one, used to come in 'the morning as his humble attendants, and carry him to school. 'One in the middle stooped, while he sat upon his back, and one 'on each side supported him; and thus was he borne triumphant.' The purfly, sand-blind lubber and blubber, with his open mouth, and face of bruised honeycomb; yet already dominant, imperial, irresistible! Not in the 'King's-chair' (of human arms), as we see, do his three satellites carry him along: rather on the *Tyrant's-saddle*, the back of his fellow-creature, must he ride prosperous!—The child is father of the man. He who had seen fifty years into coming Time, would have felt that little spectacle of mischievous schoolboys to be a great one. For us, who look back on it, and what followed it, now from afar, there arise questions enough: How looked these urchins? What jackets and galligaskins had they; felt headgear, or of dogskin leather? What was old Lichfield doing then; what thinking?—and so on, through the whole series of Corporal Trim's 'auxiliary verbs.' A picture of it all fashions itself together;—only unhappily we have no brush and no fingers.

Boyhood is now past; the ferula of Pedagogue waves harmless, in the distance: Samuel has struggled up to uncouth bulk and youthhood, wrestling with Disease and Poverty, all the way; which two continue still his companions. At College we see little of him; yet thus much, that things went not well. A rugged wild-man of the desert, awakened to the feeling of himself; proud as the proudest, poor as the poorest; stoically shut up, silently enduring the incurable: what a world of blackest gloom, with sun-gleams and pale tearful moon-gleams, and flickerings of a celestial and an infernal splendour, was this that now opened for him! But the weather is wintry; and the toes of the man are looking through his shoes. His muddy features grow of a purple and sea-green colour; a flood of black indignation mantling beneath. A truculent, raw-boned figure! Meat he has probably little; hope he has less: his feet, as we said, have come into brotherhood with the cold mire.

'Shall I be particular,' inquires Sir John Hawkins, 'and relate a circumstance of his distress, that cannot be imputed to him as an effect of his own extravagance or irregularity, and consequently reflects no disgrace on his memory? He had scarce any change of raiment, and, in a short time after Corbet left him, but one pair of shoes, and those so old that his feet were seen through them: a gentleman of his college, the father of an eminent clergyman now living, directed a servitor one morning to place a new pair at the door of Johnson's chamber; who seeing them upon his first going out, so far forgot himself and the spirit which must have actuated his unknown benefactor, that, with all the indignation of an insulted man, he threw them away.'

How exceedingly surprising!—The Rev. Dr. Hall remarks: 'As far as we can judge from a cursory view of the weekly account 'in the buttery-books, Johnson appears to have lived as well as 'other commoners and scholars.' Alas! such 'cursory view of the buttery-books,' now from the safe distance of a century, in the safe chair of a College Mastership, is one thing; the continual view of the empty or locked buttery itself was quite a different thing. But hear our Knight, how he farther discourses. 'John-'son,' quoth Sir John, 'could not at this early period of his life 'divest himself of an idea that poverty was disgraceful; and was 'very severe in his censures of that economy in both our Universi-'ties, which exacted at meals the attendance of poor scholars, 'under the several denominations of Servitors in the one, and 'Sizers in the other: he thought that the scholar's, like the 'Christian life, levelled all distinctions of rank and worldly pre-'eminence; but in this he was *mistaken:* civil polity' &c. &c.—Too true! It is man's lot to err.

However, Destiny, in all ways, means to prove the mistaken Samuel, and see what stuff is in him. He must leave these butteries of Oxford, Want like an armed man compelling him; retreat into his father's mean home; and there abandon himself for a season to inaction, disappointment, shame and nervous melancholy nigh run mad: he is probably the wretchedest man in wide England. In all ways he too must 'become perfect through *suffering*.'—High thoughts have visited him; his College Exercises have been praised beyond the walls or College; Pope himself has seen that *Translation*, and approved of it: Samuel had whispered to himself: I too am 'one and somewhat.' False thoughts; that leave only misery behind! The fever-fire of Ambition is too painfully extinguished (but not cured) in the

frost-bath of Poverty. Johnson has knocked at the gate, as one, having a right; but there was no opening: the world lies all encircled as with brass; nowhere can he find or force the smallest entrance. An ushership at Market Bosworth, and 'a disagreement between him and Sir Wolstan Dixie, the patron of the school,' yields him bread of affliction and water of affliction; but so bitter, that unassisted human nature cannot swallow them. Young Samson will grind no more in the Philistine mill of Bosworth; quits hold of Sir Wolstan, and the 'domestic chaplaincy, so far at least as to say grace at table,' and also to be 'treated with what he represented as intolerable harshness;' and so, after 'some months of such complicated misery,' feeling doubtless that there are worse things in the world than quick death by Famine, 'relinquishes a situation, which all his life afterwards he recollected 'with the strongest aversion, and even horror.' Men like Johnson are properly called the Forlorn Hope of the World: judge whether his hope was forlorn or not, by this Letter to a dull oily Printer who called himself *Sylvanus Urban:*

'Sir,—As you appear no less sensible than your readers of the defect of your poetical article, you will not be displeased if (in order to the improvement of it) I communicate to you the sentiments of a person who will undertake, on reasonable terms, sometimes to fill a column.

'His opinion is, that the public would' &c. &c.

'If such a correspondence will be agreeable to you, be pleased to inform me in two posts, what the conditions are on which you shall expect it. Your late offer (for a Prize Poem) gives me no reason to distrust your generosity. If you engage in any literary projects besides this paper, I have other designs to impart.'

Reader, the generous person, to whom this letter goes addressed, is 'Mr. Edmund Cave, at St. John's Gate, London;' the addressor of it is Samuel Johnson, in Birmingham, Warwickshire.

Nevertheless, Life rallies in the man; reasserts its right to be *lived*, even to be enjoyed. 'Better a small bush,' say the Scotch, 'than no shelter:' Johnson learns to be contented with humble human things; and is there not already an actual realised human Existence, all stirring and living on every hand of him? Go thou and do likewise! In Birmingham itself, with his own purchased goose-quill, he can earn 'five guineas;' nay, finally, the choicest terrestrial good: a Friend, who will be Wife to him! Johnson's marriage with the good Widow Porter has been treated with

ridicule by many mortals, who apparently had no understanding thereof. That the purblind, seamy-faced Wildman, stalking lonely, woe-stricken, like some Irish Gallowglass with peeled club, whose speech no man knew, whose look all men both laughed at and shuddered at, should find any brave female heart to acknowledge, at first sight and hearing of him, "This is the most sensible man I ever met with;" and then, with generous courage, to take him to itself, and say, Be thou mine; be thou warmed here, and thawed to life!—in all this, in the kind Widow's love and pity for him, in Johnson's love and gratitude, there is actually no matter for ridicule. Their wedded life, as is the common lot, was made up of drizzle and dry weather; but innocence and worth dwelt in it; and when death had ended it, a certain sacredness: Johnson's deathless affection for his Tetty was always venerable and noble.

However, be all this as it might, Johnson is now minded to wed; and will live by the trade of Pedagogy, for by this also may life be kept in. Let the world therefore take notice: '*At Edial* '*near Lichfield, in Staffordshire, young gentlemen are boarded, and* '*taught the Latin and Greek languages, by*—SAMUEL JOHNSON.' Had this Edial enterprise prospered, how different might the issue have been! Johnson had lived a life of unnoticed nobleness, or swoln into some amorphous Dr. Parr, of no avail to us; Bozzy would have dwindled into official insignificance, or risen by some other elevation; old Auchinleck had never been afflicted with "ane that keeped a schule," or obliged to violate hospitality by a "Cromwell do? God, sir, he gart kings ken that there was a *lith* in their neck!"—But the Edial enterprise did not prosper; Destiny had other work appointed for Samuel Johnson; and young gentlemen got board where they could elsewhere find it. This man was to become a Teacher of grown gentlemen, in the most surprising way; a Man of Letters, and Ruler of the British Nation for some time,—not of their bodies merely but of their minds, not *over* them but *in* them.

The career of Literature could not, in Johnson's day, any more than now, be said to lie along the shores of a Pactolus: whatever else might be gathered there, gold-dust was nowise the chief produce. The world, from the times of Socrates, St. Paul, and far earlier, has always had its Teachers; and always treated them in a peculiar way. A shrewd Townclerk (not of Ephesus),

once, in founding a Burgh-Seminary, when the question came, How the Schoolmaster should be maintained? delivered this brief counsel: "D—n them, keep them *poor!*" Considerable wisdom may lie in this aphorism. At all events, we see, the world has acted on it long, and indeed improved on it,—putting many a Schoolmaster of its great Burgh-Seminary to a death which even *cost* it something. The world, it is true, had for some time been too busy to go out of its way, and *put* any Author to death; however, the old sentence pronounced against them was found to be pretty sufficient. The first Writers, being Monks, were sworn to a vow of Poverty; the modern Authors had no need to swear to it. This was the epoch when an Otway could still die of hunger; not to speak of your innumerable Scrogginses, whom 'the Muse found stretched beneath a rug,' with 'rusty grate unconscious of a fire,' stocking-nightcap, sanded floor, and all the other escutcheons of the craft, time out of mind the heirlooms of Authorship. Scroggins, however, seems to have been but an idler; not at all so diligent as worthy Mr. Boyce, whom we might have seen *sitting up* in bed, with his wearing-apparel of Blanket about him, and a hole slit in the same, that his hand might be at liberty to work in its vocation. The worst was, that too frequently a blackguard recklessness of temper ensued, incapable of turning to account what good the gods even here had provided: your Boyces acted on some stoico-epicurean principle of *carpe diem*, as men do in bombarded towns, and seasons of raging pestilence; —and so had lost not only their life, and presence of mind, but their status as persons of respectability. The trade of Author was at about one of its lowest ebbs when Johnson embarked on it.

Accordingly we find no mention of Illuminations in the city of London, when this same Ruler of the British Nation arrived in it: no cannon-salvos are fired; no flourish of drums and trumpets greets his appearance on the scene. He enters quite quietly, with some copper halfpence in his pocket; creeps into lodgings in Exeter Street, Strand; and has a Coronation Pontiff also, of not less peculiar equipment, whom, with all submissiveness, he must wait upon, in his Vatican of St. John's Gate. This is the dull oily Printer alluded to above.

'Cave's temper,' says our Knight Hawkins, 'was phlegmatic: though he assumed, as the publisher of the Magazine, the name of Sylvanus Urban, he had few of those qualities, that constitute urbanity. Judge of his want of them by this question, which he once put to an author:

"Mr. ——, I hear you have just published a pamphlet, and am told there is a very good paragraph in it upon the subject of music: did you write that yourself?" His discernment was also slow; and as he had already at his command some writers of prose and verse, who, in the language of Booksellers, are called good hands, he was the backwarder in making advances, or courting an intimacy with Johnson. Upon the first approach of a stranger, his practice was to continue sitting; a posture in which he was ever to be found, and for a few minutes to continue silent: if at any time he was inclined to begin the discourse, it was generally by putting a leaf of the Magazine, then in the press, into the hand of his visitor, and asking his opinion of it. * * *

'He was so incompetent a judge of Johnson's abilities, that meaning at one time to dazzle him with the splendour of some of those luminaries in Literature, who favoured him with their correspondence, he told him that if he would, in the evening, be at a certain alehouse in the neighbourhood of Clerkenwell, he might have a chance of seeing Mr. Browne and another or two of those illustrious contributors: Johnson accepted the invitation; and being introduced by Cave, dressed in a loose horseman's coat, and such a great bushy wig as he constantly wore, to the sight of Mr. Browne, whom he found sitting at the upper end of a long table, in a cloud of tobacco smoke, had his curiosity gratified.'[3]

In fact, if we look seriously into the condition of Authorship at that period, we shall find that Johnson had undertaken one of the ruggedest of all possible enterprises; that here as elsewhere Fortune had given him unspeakable Contradictions to reconcile. For a man of Johnson's stamp, the Problem was twofold: *First*, not only as the humble but indispensable condition of all else, to keep himself, if so might be, *alive;* but *secondly*, to keep himself alive by speaking forth the *Truth* that was in him, and speaking it *truly*, that is, in the clearest and fittest utterance the Heavens had enabled him to give it, let the Earth say to this what she liked. Of which twofold Problem if it be hard to solve either member separately, how incalculably more so to solve it, when both are conjoined, and work with endless complication into one another! He that finds himself already *kept alive* can sometimes (unhappily not always) speak a little truth; he that finds himself able and willing, to all lengths, to *speak lies*, may, by watching how the wind sits, scrape together a livelihood, sometimes of great splendour: he, again, who finds himself provided with *neither* endowment, has but a ticklish game to play, and shall have praises

[3] Hawkins, pp. 46-50.

if he win it. Let us look a little at both faces of the matter; and see what front they then offered our Adventurer, what front he offered them.

At the time of Johnson's appearance on the field, Literature, in many senses, was in a transitional state; chiefly in this sense, as respects the pecuniary subsistence of its cultivators. It was in the very act of passing from the protection of Patrons into that of the Public; no longer to supply its necessities by laudatory Dedications to the Great, but by judicious Bargains with the Booksellers. This happy change has been much sung and celebrated; many a 'lord of the lion heart and eagle eye' looking back with scorn enough on the bygone system of Dependency: so that now it were perhaps well to consider, for a moment, what good might also be in it, what gratitude we owe it. That a good was in it, admits not of doubt. Whatsoever has existed has had its value: without some truth and worth lying in it, the thing could not have hung together, and been the organ and sustenance, and method of action, for men that reasoned and were alive. Translate a Falsehood which is wholly false into Practice, the result comes out *zero;* there is no fruit or issue to be derived from it. That in an age, when a Nobleman was still noble, still with his wealth the protector of worthy and humane things, and still venerated as such, a poor Man of Genius, his brother in nobleness, should, with unfeigned reverence, address him and say: "I have found Wisdom here, and would fain proclaim it abroad; wilt thou, of thy abundance, afford me the means?"—in all this there was no baseness; it was wholly an honest proposal, which a free man might make, and a free man listen to. So might a Tasso, with a *Gerusalemme* in his hand or in his head, speak to a Duke of Ferrara; so might a Shakspeare to his Southampton; and Continental Artists generally to their rich Protectors,—in some countries, down almost to these days. It was only when the reverence became *feigned,* that baseness entered into the transaction on both sides; and, indeed, flourished there with rapid luxuriance, till that became disgraceful for a Dryden, which a Shakspeare could once practise without offence.

Neither, it is very true, was the new way of Bookseller Mæcenasship worthless; which opened itself at this juncture, for the most important of all transport-trades, now when the old way had become too miry and impassable. Remark, moreover, how this second sort of Mæcenasship, after carrying us through nearly a century of Literary Time, appears now to have wellnigh discharged

its function also; and to be working pretty rapidly towards some *third* method, the exact conditions of which are yet nowise visible. Thus all things have their end; and we should part with them all, not in anger, but in peace. The Bookseller-System, during its peculiar century, the whole of the eighteenth, did carry us handsomely along; and many good Works it has left us, and many good Men it maintained: if it is now expiring by PUFFERY, as the Patronage-System did by FLATTERY (for *Lying* is ever the forerunner of Death, nay is itself Death), let us not forget its benefits; how it nursed Literature through boyhood and school-years, as Patronage had wrapped it in soft swaddling-bands;—till now we see it about to put on the *toga virilis*, could it but *find* any such!

There is tolerable travelling on the beaten road, run how it may; only on the new road not yet levelled and paved, and on the old road all broken into ruts and quagmires, is the travelling bad or impracticable. The difficulty lies always in the *transition* from one method to another. In which state it was that Johnson now found Literature; and out of which, let us also say, he manfully carried it. What remarkable mortal *first paid copyright* in England we have not ascertained; perhaps, for almost a century before, some scarce visible or ponderable pittance of wages had occasionally been yielded by the Seller of Books to the Writer of them: the original Covenant, stipulating to produce *Paradise Lost* on the one hand, and *Five Pounds Sterling* on the other, still lies (we have been told) in black-on-white, for inspection and purchase by the curious, at a Bookshop in Chancery Lane. Thus had the matter gone on, in a mixed confused way, for some threescore years;—as ever, in such things, the old system *overlaps* the new, by some generation or two, and only dies quite out when the new has got a complete organisation and weather-worthy surface of its own. Among the first Authors, the very first of any significance, who lived by the day's wages of his craft, and composedly faced the world on that basis, was Samuel Johnson.

At the time of Johnson's appearance there were still two ways, on which an Author might attempt proceeding: there were the Mæcenases proper in the West End of London; and the Mæcenases virtual of St. John's Gate and Paternoster Row. To a considerate man it might seem uncertain which method were preferable: neither had very high attractions; the Patron's aid was now well-nigh *necessarily* polluted by sycophancy, before it could come to hand; the Bookseller's was deformed with greedy stupidity, not to

say entire wooden-headedness and disgust (so that an Osborne even required to be knocked down, by an author of spirit), and could barely keep the thread of life together. The one was the wages of suffering and poverty; the other, unless you gave strict heed to it, the wages of sin. In time, Johnson had opportunity of looking into both methods, and ascertaining what they were; but found, at first trial, that the former would in nowise do for him. Listen, once again, to that far-famed Blast of Doom, proclaiming into the ear of Lord Chesterfield, and, through him, of the listening world, that patronage should be no more!

'Seven years, my Lord, have now past, since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my Work[4] through difficulties, of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it at last to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance,[5] one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour.

'The shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

'Is not a patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind: but it has been delayed till I am indifferent and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary and cannot impart it; till I am known and do not want it. I hope, it is no very cynical asperity, not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received; or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a patron which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

'Having carried on my Work thus far with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less: for I have long been awakened from that dream of hope, in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation,

'My Lord, your Lordship's most humble, most obedient servant,

'SAM. JOHNSON.'

And thus must the rebellious 'Sam. Johnson' turn him to the

[4] The *English Dictionary*.

[5] Were time and printer's space of no value, it were easy to wash away certain foolish soot-stains dropped here as 'Notes;' especially two: the one on this word, and on Boswell's Note to it; the other on the paragraph which follows. Let 'ED.' look a second time; he will find that Johnson's sacred regard for *Truth* is the only thing to be 'noted' in the former case; also, in the latter, that this of 'Love's being a native of the rocks' actually has a 'meaning.'

Bookselling guild, and the wondrous chaos of 'Author by trade;' and, though ushered into it only by that dull oily Printer, 'with 'loose horseman's coat and such a great bushy wig as he constantly 'wore,' and only as subaltern to some commanding-officer 'Browne, sitting amid tobacco-smoke at the head of a long table in the alehouse at Clerkenwell,'—gird himself together for the warfare; having no alternative!

Little less contradictory was that other branch of the twofold Problem now set before Johnson: the speaking forth of *Truth*. Nay taken by itself, it had in those days become so complex as to puzzle strongest heads, with nothing else imposed on them for solution; and even to turn high heads of that sort into mere hollow *vizards*, speaking neither truth nor falsehood, nor anything but what the Prompter and Player (ὑποκριτὴς) put into them. Alas! for poor Johnson Contradiction abounded; in spirituals and in temporals, within and without. Born with the strongest unconquerable love of just Insight, he must begin to live and learn in a scene where Prejudice flourishes with rank luxuriance. England was all confused enough, sightless and yet restless, take it where you would; but figure the best intellect in England nursed up to manhood in the idol-cavern of a poor Tradesman's house, in the cathedral city of Lichfield! What is Truth? said jesting Pilate. What is Truth? might earnest Johnson much more emphatically say. Truth, no longer, like the Phœnix, in rainbow plumage, poured, from her glittering beak, such tones of sweetest melody as took captive every ear: the Phœnix (waxing old) had wellnigh ceased her singing, and empty wearisome Cuckoos, and doleful monotonous Owls, innumerable Jays also, and twittering Sparrows on the housetop, pretended they were repeating her.

It was wholly a divided age, that of Johnson; Unity existed nowhere, in its Heaven, or in its Earth. Society, through every fibre, was rent asunder: all things, it was then becoming visible, but could not then be understood, were moving onwards, with an impulse received ages before, yet now first with a decisive rapidity, towards that great chaotic gulf, where, whether in the shape of French Revolutions, Reform Bills, or what shape soever, bloody or bloodless, the descent and engulfment assume, we now see them weltering and boiling. Already Cant, as once before hinted, had begun to play its wonderful part, for the hour was come: two ghastly Apparitions, unreal *simulacra* both, HYPOCRISY and ATHEISM are already, in silence, parting the world. Opinion and Action,

which should live together as wedded pair, 'one flesh,' more properly as Soul and Body, have commenced their open quarrel, and are suing for a separate maintenance,—as if they could exist separately. To the earnest mind, in any position, firm footing and a life of Truth was becoming daily more difficult: in Johnson's position it was more difficult than in almost any other.

If, as for a devout nature was inevitable and indispensable, he looked up to Religion, as to the polestar of his voyage, already there was no *fixed* polestar any longer visible; but two stars, a whole constellation of stars, each proclaiming itself as the true. There was the red portentous comet-star of Infidelity; the dim fixed-star, burning ever dimmer, uncertain now whether not an atmospheric *meteor*, of Orthodoxy: which of these to choose? The keener intellects of Europe had, almost without exception, ranged themselves under the former: for some half century, it had been the general effort of European speculation to proclaim that Destruction of Falsehood was the only Truth; daily had Denial waxed stronger and stronger, Belief sunk more and more into decay. From our Bolingbrokes and Tolands the sceptical fever had passed into France, into Scotland; and already it smouldered, far and wide, secretly eating out the heart of England. Bayle had played his part; Voltaire on a wider theatre, was playing his,—Johnson's senior by some fifteen years: Hume and Johnson were children almost of the same year.[6] To this keener order of intellects did Johnson's indisputably belong: was he to join them; was he to oppose them? A complicated question: for, alas, the Church itself is no longer, even to him, wholly of true adamant, but of adamant and baked mud conjoined: the zealously Devout has to find his Church tottering; and pause amazed to see, instead of inspired Priest, many a swine-feeding Trulliber ministering at her altar. It is not the least curious of the incoherences which Johnson had to reconcile, that, though by nature contemptuous and incredulous, he was, at that time of day, to find his safety and glory in defending, with his whole might, the traditions of the elders.

Not less perplexingly intricate, and on both sides hollow or questionable, was the aspect of Politics. Whigs struggling blindly forward, Tories holding blindly back; each with some forecast of a half truth; neither with any forecast of the whole! Admire here this other Contradiction in the life of Johnson; that, though

[6] Johnson, September 1709; Hume, April 1711.

ıe most ungovernable, and in practice the most independent of ıen, he must be a Jacobite, and worshipper of the Divine Right. n Politics also there are Irreconcilables enough for him. As, ıdeed, how could it be otherwise? For when Religion is torn sunder, and the very heart of man's existence set against itself, hen in all subordinate departments there must needs be hollowess, incoherence. The English Nation had rebelled against a 'yrant; and, by the hands of religious tyrannicides, exacted stern engeance of him: Democracy had risen iron-sinewed, and, 'like n infant Hercules, strangled serpents in its cradle.' But as yet one knew the meaning or extent of the phenomenon: Europe 'as not ripe for it; not to be ripened for it but by the culture and arious experience of another century and a half. And now, when he King-killers were all swept away, and a milder *second* picture 'as painted over the canvas of the *first*, and betitled 'Glorious Revolution,' who doubted but the catastrophe was over, the whole usiness finished, and Democracy gone to its long sleep? Yet 'as it like a business finished and not finished; a lingering unasiness dwelt in all minds: the deep-lying, resistless Tendency, 'hich had still to be *obeyed*, could no longer be *recognised*; thus 'as there halfness, insincerity, uncertainty in men's ways; instead f heroic Puritans and heroic Cavaliers, came now a dawdling set f argumentative Whigs, and a dawdling set of deaf-eared Tories; ach half-foolish, each half-false. The Whigs were false and 'ithout basis; inasmuch as their whole object was Resistance, 'riticism, Demolition,—they knew not why, or towards what issue. n Whiggism, ever since a Charles and his Jeffries had ceased) meddle with it, and to have any Russel or Sydney to meddle 'ith, there could be no divineness of character; not till, in ıese latter days, it took the figure of a thorough-going, allefying Radicalism, was there any solid footing for it to stand n. Of the like uncertain, half-hollow nature had Toryism bcome, in Johnson's time; preaching forth indeed an everlasting ıth, the duty of Loyalty; yet now, ever since the final expulsion f the Stuarts, having no *Person*, but only an *Office* to be loyal); no living *Soul* to worship, but only a dead velvet-cushioned *Chair*. Its attitude, therefore, was stiff-necked refusal to move; s that of Whiggism was clamorous command to move,—let rhyme ıd reason, on both hands, say to it what they might. The conıquence was: Immeasurable floods of contentious jargon, tending ɔwhither; false conviction; false resistance to conviction; decay

(ultimately to become decease) of whatsoever was once understood by the words, *Principle*, or *Honesty* of heart; the louder and louder triumph of *Half*ness and Plausibility over *Whole*ness and Truth; — at last, this all-overshadowing efflorescence of QUACKERY, which we now see, with all its deadening and killing fruits, in all its innumerable branches, down to the lowest. How, between these jarring extremes, wherein the rotten lay so inextricably intermingled with the sound, and as yet no eye could see through the ulterior meaning of the matter, was a faithful and true man to adjust himself?

That Johnson, in spite of all drawbacks, adopted the Conservative side; stationed himself as the unyielding opponent of Innovation, resolute to hold fast the form of sound words, could not but increase, in no small measure, the difficulties he had to strive with. We mean, the *moral* difficulties; for in *economical* respects, it might be pretty equally balanced; the Tory servant of the Public had perhaps about the same chance of promotion as the Whig: and all the promotion Johnson aimed at was the privilege *to live*. But, for what, though unavowed, was no less indispensable, for his peace of conscience, and the clear ascertainment and feeling of his Duty as an inhabitant of God's world, the case was hereby rendered much more complex. To resist Innovation is easy enough on one condition: that you resist Inquiry. This is, and was, the common expedient of your common Conservatives; but it would not do for Johnson: he was a zealous recommender and practiser of Inquiry; once for all, could not and would not believe, much less speak and act, a Falsehood: the *form* of sound words, which he held fast, must have a *meaning* in it. Here lay the difficulty: to behold a portentous mixture of True and False, and feel that he must dwell and fight there; yet to love and defend only the True. How worship, when you cannot and will not be an idolater; yet cannot help discerning that the Symbol of your Divinity has half become idolatrous? This was the question, which Johnson, the man both of clear eye and devout believing heart, must answer,—at peril of his life. The Whig or Sceptic, on the other hand, had a much simpler part to play. To him only the idolatrous side of things, nowise the divine one, lay visible: not *worship*, therefore, nay in the strict sense not heart-honesty, only at most lip- and hand-honesty, is required of him. What spiritual force is his, he can conscientiously employ in the work of cavilling, of pulling-down what is False. For the rest, that there is or can be any Truth

of a higher than sensual nature, has not occurred to him. The utmost, therefore, that he as man has to aim at, is RESPECTABILITY, the suffrages of his fellow-men. Such suffrages he may weigh as well as count: or count only: according as he is a Burke or a Wilkes. But beyond these there lies nothing divine for him; these attained, all is attained. Thus is his whole world distinct and rounded-in; a clear goal is set before him; a firm path, rougher or smoother; at worst a firm region wherein to seek a path: let him gird-up his loins, and travel on without misgivings! For the honest Conservative, again, nothing is distinct, nothing rounded-in: RESPECTABILITY can nowise be his highest Godhead; not one aim, but two conflicting aims to be continually reconciled by him, has he to strive after. A difficult position, as we said; which accordingly the most did, even in those days, but half defend: by the surrender, namely, of their own too cumbersome *honesty*, or even *understanding;* after which the completest defence was worth little. Into this difficult position Johnson, nevertheless, threw himself: found it indeed full of difficulties; yet held it out manfully, as an honest-hearted, open-sighted man, while life was in him.

Such was that same 'twofold Problem' set before Samuel Johnson. Consider all these moral difficulties; and add to them the fearful aggravation, which lay in that other circumstance, that he needed a continual appeal to the Public, must continually produce a certain impression and conviction on the Public; that if he did not, he ceased to have 'provision for the day that was passing over him,' he could not any longer live! How a vulgar character, once launched into this wild element; driven onwards by Fear and Famine; without other aim than to clutch what Provender (of Enjoyment in any kind) he could get, always if possible keeping *quite* clear of the Gallows and Pillory, that is to say, minding heedfully both 'person' and 'character,'—would have floated hither and thither in it; and contrived to eat some three repasts daily, and wear some three suits yearly, and then to depart and disappear, having consumed his last ration: all this might be worth knowing, but were in itself a trivial knowledge. How a noble man, resolute for the Truth, to whom Shams and Lies were once for all an abomination, was to act in it: *here* lay the mystery. By what methods, by what gifts of eye and hand, does a heroic Samuel Johnson, now when cast forth into that waste Chaos of Authorship, maddest of things, a mingled Phlegethon and Fleet-ditch, with its

floating lumber, and sea-krakens, and mud-spectres,—shape himself a voyage; of the *transient* driftwood, and the *enduring* iron, build him a sea-worthy Life-boat, and sail therein, undrowned, unpolluted, through the roaring 'mother of dead dogs,' onwards to an eternal Landmark, and City that hath foundations? This high question is even the one answered in Boswell's Book; which Book we therefore, not so falsely, have named a *Heroic Poem;* for in it there lies the whole argument of such. Glory to our brave Samuel! He accomplished this wonderful Problem; and now through long generations we point to him, and say: Here also was a Man; let the world once more have assurance of a Man!

Had there been in Johnson, now when afloat on that confusion worse confounded of grandeur and squalor, no light but an earthly outward one, he too must have made shipwreck. With his diseased body, and vehement voracious heart, how easy for him to become a *carpe-diem* Philosopher, like the rest, and live and die as miserably as any Boyce of that Brotherhood! But happily there was a higher light for him; shining as a lamp to his path; which, in all paths, would teach him to act and walk not as a fool, but as wise, and in those evil days too 'redeeming the time.' Under dimmer or clearer manifestations, a Truth had been revealed to him: I also am a Man; even in this unutterable element of Authorship, I may live as beseems a Man! That Wrong is not only different from Right, but that it is in strict scientific terms *infinitely* different; even as the gaining of the whole world set against the losing of one's own soul, or (as Johnson had it) a Heaven set against a Hell; that in all situations out of the Pit of Tophet, wherein a living Man has stood or can stand, there is actually a Prize of quite *infinite* value placed within his reach, namely a *Duty* for him to do: this highest Gospel, which forms the basis and worth of all other Gospels whatsoever, had been revealed to Samuel Johnson; and the man had believed it, and laid it faithfully to heart. Such knowledge of the *transcendental*, immeasurable character of Duty we call the basis of all Gospels, the essence of all Religion: he who with his whole soul knows not this, as yet knows nothing, as yet *is* properly nothing.

This, happily for him, Johnson was one of those that knew: under a certain authentic Symbol it stood forever present to his eyes: a Symbol, indeed, waxing old as doth a garment; yet which had guided forward, as their Banner and celestial Pillar of Fire, innumerable saints and witnesses, the fathers of our modern world;

and for him also had still a sacred significance. It does not appear that at any time Johnson was what we call irreligious: but in his sorrows and isolation, when hope died away, and only a long vista of suffering and toil lay before him to the end, then first did Religion shine forth in its meek, everlasting clearness; even as the stars do in black night, which in the daytime and dusk were hidden by inferior lights. How a true man, in the midst of errors and uncertainties, shall work out for himself a sure Life-truth; and adjusting the transient to the eternal, amid the fragments of ruined Temples build up, with toil and pain, a little Altar for himself, and worship there; how Samuel Johnson, in the era of Voltaire, can purify and fortify his soul, and hold real communion with the Highest, 'in the Church of St. Clement Danes:' this too stands all unfolded in his Biography, and is among the most touching and memorable things there; a thing to be looked at with pity, admiration, awe. Johnson's Religion was as the light of life to him; without it his heart was all sick, dark and had no guidance left.

He is now enlisted, or impressed, into that unspeakable shoeblack-seraph Army of Authors; but can feel hereby that he fights under a celestial flag, and will quit him like a man. The first grand requisite, an assured heart, he therefore has: what his outward equipments and accoutrements are, is the next question; an important, though inferior one. His intellectual stock, intrinsically viewed, is perhaps inconsiderable: the furnishings of an English School and English University; good knowledge of the Latin tongue, a more uncertain one of Greek: this is a rather slender stock of Education wherewith to front the world, But then it is to be remembered that his world was England; that such was the culture England commonly supplied and expected. Besides, Johnson has been a voracious reader, though a desultory one, and oftenest in strange scholastic, too obsolete Libraries; he has also rubbed shoulders with the press of Actual Life for some thirty years now: views or hallucinations of innumerable things are weltering to and fro in him. Above all, be his weapons what they may, he has an arm that can wield them. Nature has given him her choicest gift,—an open eye and heart. He will look on the world, wheresoever he can catch a glimpse of it, with eager curiosity: to the last, we find this a striking characteristic of him; for all human interests he has a sense; the meanest handicraftsman could interest him, even in extreme age, by speaking of his craft: the ways of men are all interesting to him; any human thing, that

he did not know, he wished to know. Reflection, moreover, Meditation, was what he practised incessantly, with or without his will: for the mind of the man was earnest, deep as well as humane. Thus would the world, such fragments of it as he could survey, form itself, or continually tend to form itself, into a coherent Whole; on any and on all phases of which, his vote and voice must be well worth listening to. As a Speaker of the Word, he will speak real words; no idle jargon or hollow triviality will issue from him. His aim too is clear, attainable; that of *working for his wages:* let him *do* this honestly, and all else will follow of its own accord.

With such omens, into such a warfare, did Johnson go forth. A rugged hungry Kerne or Gallowglass, as we called him: yet indomitable; in whom lay the true spirit of a Soldier. With giant's force he toils, since such is his appointment, were it but at hewing of wood and drawing of water for old sedentary bushy-wigged Cave; distinguishes himself by mere quantity, if there is to be no other distinction. He can write all things; frosty Latin verses, if these are the saleable commodity; Book-prefaces, Political Philippics, Review Articles, Parliamentary Debates: all things he does rapidly; still more surprising, all things he does thoroughly and well. How he sits there, in his rough-hewn, amorphous bulk, in that upper-room at St. John's Gate, and trundles-off sheet after sheet of those Senate-of-Lilliput Debates, to the clamorous Printer's Devils waiting for them with insatiable throat, down stairs; himself perhaps *impransus* all the while! Admire also the greatness of Literature; how a grain of mustard-seed cast into its Nile-waters, shall settle in the teeming mould, and be found, one day, as a Tree, in whose branches all the fowls of heaven may lodge. Was it not so with these Lilliput Debates? In that small project and act began the stupendous FOURTH ESTATE; whose wide world-embracing influences what eye can take in; in whose boughs are there not already fowls of strange feather lodged? Such things, and far stranger, were done in that wondrous old Portal, even in latter times. And then figure Samuel dining 'behind the screen,' from a trencher covertly handed-in to him, at a preconcerted nod from the 'great bushy wig;' Samuel too ragged to show face, yet 'made a happy man of' by hearing his praise spoken. If to Johnson himself, then much more to us, may that St. John's Gate be a place we can 'never pass without veneration.'[1]

[1] All Johnson's places of resort and abode are venerable, and now indeed to

Poverty, Distress, and as yet Obscurity, are his companions: so poor is he that his Wife must leave him, and seek shelter among other relations; Johnson's household has accommodation for one inmate only. To all his ever-varying, ever-recurring troubles, moreover, must be added this continual one of ill-health, and its concomitant depressiveness: a galling load, which would have crushed most common mortals into desperation, is his appointed ballast and life-burden; he 'could not remember the day he had passed free from pain.' Nevertheless, Life, as we said before, is always Life: a healthy soul, imprison it as you will, in squalid garrets, shabby coat, bodily sickness, or whatever else, will assert

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he many as well as to the few; for his name has become great; and, as we must often with a kind of sad admiration recognise, there is, even to the rudest man, no greatness so venerable as intellectual, as spiritual greatness; nay properly there is no other venerable at all. For example, what soul-subduing magic, for the very clown or craftsman of our England, lies in the word Scholar'! "He is a Scholar:" he is a man *wiser* than we; of a wisdom to us *boundless*, infinite: who shall speak his worth! Such things, we say, fill us with a certain pathetic admiration of defaced and obstructed yet glorious man; archangel though in ruins,—or rather, though in *rubbish* of encumbrances and mud-incrustations, which also are not to be perpetual.

Nevertheless, in this mad-whirling all-forgetting London, the haunts of the mighty that were can seldom without a strange difficulty be discovered. Will any man, for instance, tell us which *bricks* it was in Lincoln's Inn Buildings that Ben Johnson's hand and trowel laid? No man, it is to be feared,—and also grumbled at. With Samuel Johnson may it prove otherwise! A Gentleman of the British Museum is said to have made drawings of all *his* residences: the blessing of Old Mortality be upon him! We ourselves, not without labour and risk, lately discovered GOUGH SQUARE, between Fleet Street and Holborn (adjoining both to BOLT COURT and to JOHNSON'S COURT); and on the second day of search, the very House there, wherein the *English Dictionary* was composed. It is the first or corner house on the right hand, as you enter through the arched way from the North-west. The actual occupant, an elderly, well-washed, decent-looking man, invited us to enter; and courteously undertook to be *cicerone;* though in his memory lay nothing but the foolishest jumble and hallucination. It is a stout, old-fashioned, oak-balustraded house: "I have spent many a pound and penny on it since then," said the worthy Landlord: "here, you see, this Bedroom was the Doctor's study; that was the garden" (a plot of delved ground somewhat larger than a bed-quilt), "where he walked for exercise; these three garret Bedrooms" (where his three Copyists sat and wrote) "were the place he kept his—*Pupils* in"! *Tempus edax rerum!* Yet *ferax* also: for our friend now added, with a wistful look, which strove to seem merely historical: "I let it all in Lodgings, to respectable gentlemen; by the quarter or the month; it's all one to me." —"To me also," whispered the Ghost of Samuel, as we went pensively our ways.

its heaven-granted indefeasible Freedom, its right to conquer difficulties, to do work, even to feel gladness. Johnson does not whine over his existence, but manfully makes the most and best of it. 'He said, a man might live in a garret at eighteenpence 'a-week: few people would inquire where he lodged; and if they 'did, it was easy to say, "Sir, I am to be found at such a place." 'By spending threepence in a coffee-house, he might be for some 'hours every day in very good company; he might dine for sixpence, 'breakfast on bread-and-milk for a penny, and do without supper. 'On *clean-shirt day* he went abroad and paid visits.' Think by whom and of whom this was uttered, and ask them, Whether there is more pathos in it than in a whole circulating-library of *Giaours* and *Harolds*, or less pathos? On another occasion, 'when Dr. 'Johnson, one day, read his own Satire, in which the life of a 'scholar is painted, with the various obstructions thrown in his 'way to fortune and to fame, he burst into a passion of tears: Mr. 'Thrale's family and Mr. Scott only were present, who, in a jocose 'way, clapped him on the back, and said, "What's all this, my 'dear sir? Why, you and I and *Hercules*, you know, were all 'troubled with *melancholy*." He was a very large man, and made-'out the triumvirate with Johnson and Hercules comically enough.' These were sweet tears; the sweet victorious remembrance lay in them of toils indeed frightful, yet never flinched from, and now triumphed over. 'One day it shall delight you also to remember labour done!'—Neither, though Johnson is obscure and poor, need the highest enjoyment of existence, that of heart freely communing with heart, be denied him. Savage and he wander homeless through the streets; without bed, yet not without friendly converse; such another conversation not, it is like, producible in the proudest drawing-room of London. Nor, under the void Night, upon the hard pavement, are their own woes the only topic: nowise; they "will stand by their country," they there, the two 'Backwoodsmen' of the Brick Desert!

Of all outward evils Obscurity is perhaps in itself the least. To Johnson, as to a healthy-minded man, the fantastic article, sold or given under the title of *Fame*, had little or no value but its intrinsic one. He prized it as the means of getting him employment and good wages; scarcely as anything more. His light and guidance came from a loftier source; of which, in honest aversion to all hypocrisy or pretentious talk, he spoke not to men; nay perhaps, being of a *healthy* mind, had never spoken to himself.

We reckon it a striking fact in Johnson's history, this carelessness of his to Fame. Most authors speak of their 'Fame' as if it were a quite priceless matter; the grand ultimatum, and heavenly Constantine's-Banner they had to follow, and conquer under.—Thy 'Fame'! Unhappy mortal, where will it and thou both be in some fifty years? Shakspeare himself has lasted but two hundred; Homer (partly by accident) three thousand: and does not already an ETERNITY encircle every *Me* and every *Thee?* Cease, then, to sit feverishly hatching on that 'Fame' of thine; and flapping and shrieking with fierce hisses, like brood-goose on her last egg, if man shall or dare approach it! Quarrel not with me, hate me not, my Brother: make what thou canst of thy egg, and welcome: God knows, I will not steal it; I believe it to be *addle.*—Johnson, for his part, was no man to be killed by a review; concerning which matter, it was said by a benevolent person: If any author *can* be reviewed to death, let it be, with all convenient despatch, *done.* Johnson thankfully receives any word spoken in his favour; is nowise disobliged by a lampoon, but will look at it, if pointed out to him, and show how it might have been done better: the lampoon itself is indeed *nothing,* a soap-bubble that next moment will become a drop of sour suds; but in the mean while, if it do anything, it keeps him more in the world's eye, and the next *bargain* will be all the richer: "Sir, if they should cease to talk of me, I must starve." Sound heart and understanding head: these fail no man, not even a Man of Letters!

Obscurity, however, was, in Johnson's case, whether a light or heavy evil, likely to be no lasting one. He is animated by the spirit of a true *workman,* resolute to do his work well; and he *does* his work well; all his work, that of writing, that of living. A man of this stamp is unhappily not so common in the literary or in any other department of the world, that he can continue always unnoticed. By slow degrees, Johnson emerges; looming, at first, huge and dim in the eye of an observant few; at last disclosed, in his real proportions, to the eye of the whole world, and encircled with a 'light-nimbus' of glory, so that whoso is not blind must and shall behold him. By slow degrees, we said; for this also is notable; slow but sure: as his fame waxes not by exaggerated clamour of what he *seems* to be, but by better and better insight of what he *is,* so it will last and stand wearing, being genuine. Thus indeed is it always, or nearly always, with true fame. The heavenly Luminary rises amid vapours; stargazers enough must

scan it with critical telescopes; it makes no blazing, the world can either look at it, or forbear looking at it; not till after a time and times does its celestial eternal nature become indubitable. Pleasant, on the other hand, is the blazing of a Tarbarrel; the crowd dance merrily round it, with loud huzzaing, universal three-times-three, and, like Homer's peasants, 'bless the useful light:' but unhappily it so soon ends in darkness, foul choking smoke; and is kicked into the gutters, a nameless imbroglio of charred staves, pitch-cinders and *vomissement du diable!*

But indeed, from of old, Johnson has enjoyed all, or nearly all, that Fame can yield any man: the respect, the obedience of those that are about him and inferior to him; of those whose opinion alone can have any forcible impression on him. A little circle gathers round the Wise man; which gradually enlarges as the report thereof spreads, and more can come to see and to believe; for Wisdom is precious, and of irresistible attraction to all. 'An inspired-idiot,' Goldsmith, hangs strangely about him; though, as Hawkins says, 'he loved not Johnson, but rather envied him for 'his parts; and once entreated a friend to desist from praising 'him, "for in doing so," said he, "you harrow-up my very soul!"' Yet, on the whole, there is no evil in the 'gooseberry-fool;' but rather much good; of a finer, if of a weaker, sort than Johnson's; and all the more genuine that he himself could never become *conscious* of it,—though unhappily never cease *attempting* to become so: the Author of the genuine *Vicar of Wakefield*, nill he, will he, must needs fly towards such a mass of genuine Manhood; and Dr. Minor keep gyrating round Dr. Major, alternately attracted and repelled. Then there is the chivalrous Topham Beauclerk, with his sharp wit, and gallant courtly ways: there is Bennet Langton, an orthodox gentleman, and worthy; though Johnson once laughed, louder almost than mortal, at his last will and testament; and 'could not stop his merriment, but continued 'it all the way till he got without the Temple-gate; then burst 'into such a fit of laughter that he appeared to be almost in 'a convulsion; and, in order to support himself, laid hold of one 'of the posts at the side of the foot-pavement, and sent forth peals 'so loud that, in the silence of the night, his voice seemed to 'resound from Temple-bar to Fleet-ditch!' Lastly comes his solid-thinking, solid-feeding Thrale, the well-beloved man; with *Thralia*, a bright papilionaceous creature, whom the elephant loved to play with, and wave to and fro upon his trunk. Not to

k of a reverent Bozzy, for what need is there farther?—Or of spiritual Luminaries, with tongue or pen, who made that age arkable; or of Highland Lairds drinking, in fierce usquebaugh, ur health, Toctor Shonson!"—Still less of many such as that 'Mr. F. Lewis,' older in date, of whose birth, death and whole estrial *res gestæ*, this only, and strange enough this actually, ives: "Sir, he lived in London, and hung loose upon society!" PARVI *nominis umbra*.—

a his fifty-third year he is beneficed, by the royal bounty, with ension of three-hundred pounds. Loud clamour is always more ess insane: but probably the insanest of all loud clamours in eighteenth century was this that was raised about Johnson's sion. Men seem to be led by the noses: but in reality, it is the ears,—as some ancient slaves were, who had their ears d; or as some modern quadrupeds may be, whose ears are . Very falsely was it said, 'Names do not change Things.' nes do change Things; nay for most part they are the only stance, which mankind can discern in Things. The whole that Johnson, during the remaining twenty-two years of his drew from the public funds of England, would have supported e Supreme Priest for about half as many weeks; it amounts nearly to the revenue of our poorest Church-Overseer for one lvemonth. Of secular Administrators of Provinces, and Horse-luers, and Game-destroyers, we shall not so much as speak: who were the Primates of England, and the Primates of All land, during Johnson's days? No man has remembered. in, is the Primate of all England something, or is he nothing? omething, then what but the man who, in the supreme degree, hes and spiritually edifies, and leads towards Heaven by guiding ly through the Earth, the living souls that inhabit England? touch here upon deep matters; which but remotely concern nd might lead us into still deeper: clear, in the mean while, s that the true Spiritual Edifier and Soul's-Father of all land was, and till very lately continued to be, the man named uel Johnson,—whom this scot-and-lot-paying world cackled oachfully to see remunerated like a Supervisor of Excise!

Destiny had beaten hard on poor Samuel, and did never e to visit him too roughly, yet the last section of his Life ht be pronounced victorious, and on the whole happy. He not idle; but now no longer goaded-on by want; the light h had shone irradiating the dark haunts of Poverty, now

illuminates the circles of Wealth, of a certain culture and elegant intelligence; he who had once been admitted to speak with Edmund Cave and Tobacco Browne, now admits a Reynolds and a Burke to speak with him. Loving friends are there; Listeners, even Answerers: the fruit of his long labours lies round him in fair legible Writings, of Philosophy, Eloquence, Morality, Philology; some excellent, all worthy and genuine Works; for which too, a deep, earnest murmur of thanks reaches him from all ends of his Fatherland. Nay there are works of Goodness, of undying Mercy, which even he has possessed the power to do: 'What I gave I have; what I spent I had!' Early friends had long sunk into the grave; yet in his soul they ever lived, fresh and clear, with soft pious breathings towards them, not without a still hope of one day meeting them again in purer union. Such was Johnson's Life: the victorious Battle of a free, true Man. Finally he died the death of the free and true: a dark cloud of Death, solemn and not untinged with haloes of immortal Hope, 'took him away,' and our eyes could no longer behold him; but can still behold the trace and impress of his courageous honest spirit, deep-legible in the World's Business, wheresoever he walked and was.

To estimate the quantity of Work that Johnson performed, how much poorer the World were had it wanted him, can, as in all such cases, never be accurately done; cannot, till after some longer space, be approximately done. All work is as seed sown; it grows and spreads, and sows itself anew, and so, in endless palingenesia, lives and works. To Johnson's Writings, good and solid, and still profitable as they are, we have already rated his Life and Conversation as superior. By the one and by the other, who shall compute what effects have been produced, and are still, and into deep Time, producing?

So much, however, we can already see: It is now some three quarters of a century that Johnson has been the Prophet of the English; the man by whose light the English people, in public and in private, more than by any other man's, have guided their existence. Higher light than that immediately *practical* one; higher virtue than an honest PRUDENCE, he could not then communicate; nor perhaps could they have received: such light, such virtue, however, he did communicate. How to thread this labyrinthic Time, the fallen and falling Ruin of Times; to silence vain Scruples, hold firm to the last the fragments of old Belief,

and with earnest eye still discern some glimpses of a true path, and go forward thereon, 'in a world where there is much to be done, and little to be known:' this is what Samuel Johnson, by act and word, taught his Nation; what his Nation received and learned of him, more than of any other. We can view him as the preserver and transmitter of whatsoever was genuine in the spirit of Toryism; which genuine spirit, it is now becoming manifest, must again embody itself in all new forms of Society, be what they may, that are to exist, and have continuance—elsewhere than on Paper. The *last* in many things, Johnson was the last genuine Tory; the last of Englishmen who, with strong voice and wholly-believing heart, preached the Doctrine of Standing-still; who, without selfishness or slavishness, reverenced the existing Powers, and could assert the privileges of rank, though himself poor, neglected and plebeian; who had heart-devoutness with heart-hatred of cant, was orthodox-religious with his eyes open; and in all things and everywhere spoke out in plain English, from a soul wherein jesuitism could find no harbour, and with the front and tone not of a diplomatist but of a man.

The last of the Tories was Johnson: not Burke, as is often said; Burke was essentially a Whig, and only, on reaching the verge of the chasm towards which Whiggism from the first was inevitably leading, recoiled; and, like a man vehement rather than earnest, a resplendent far-sighted Rhetorician rather than a deep sure Thinker, recoiled with no measure, convulsively, and damaging what he drove back with him.

In a world which exists by the balance of Antagonisms, the respective merit of the Conservator and the Innovator must ever remain debatable. Great, in the mean while, and undoubted for both sides, is the merit of him who, in a day of Change, walks wisely, honestly. Johnson's aim was in itself an impossible one: this of stemming the eternal Flood of Time; of clutching all things, and anchoring them down, and saying, Move not!—how could it or should it, ever have success? The strongest man can but retard the current partially and for a short hour. Yet even in such shortest retardation may not an inestimable value lie? If England has escaped the blood-bath of a French Revolution; and may yet, in virtue of this delay and of the experience it has given, work out her deliverance calmly into a new Era, let Samuel Johnson, beyond all contemporary or succeeding men, have the praise for it. We said above that he was appointed to be Ruler

of the British Nation for a season: whoso will look beyond the surface, into the heart of the world's movements, may find that all Pitt Administrations, and Continental Subsidies, and Waterloo victories, rested on the possibility of making England, yet a little while, *Toryish*, Loyal to the Old; and this again on the anterior reality, that the Wise had found such Loyalty still practicable, and recommendable. England had its Hume, as France had its Voltaires and Diderots; but the Johnson was peculiar to us.

If we ask now, by what endowment it mainly was that Johnson realised such a Life for himself and others; what quality of character the main phenomena of his Life may be most naturally deduced from, and his other qualities most naturally subordinated to, in our conception of him, perhaps the answer were: The quality of Courage, of Valour; that Johnson was a Brave Man. The Courage that can go forth, once and away, to Chalk-Farm, and have itself shot, and snuffed out, with decency, is nowise wholly what we mean here. Such courage we indeed esteem an exceeding small matter; capable of coexisting with a life full of falsehood, feebleness, poltroonery and despicability. Nay oftener it is Cowardice rather that produces the result: for consider, Is the Chalk-Farm Pistoleer inspired with any reasonable Belief and Determination; or is he hounded-on by haggard indefinable Fear, —how he will be *cut* at public places, and 'plucked geese of the neighbourhood' will wag their tongues at him a plucked goose? If he go then, and be shot without shrieking or audible uproar, it is well for him: nevertheless there is nothing amazing in it. Courage to manage all this has not perhaps been denied to any man, or to any woman. Thus, do not recruiting sergeants drum through the streets of manufacturing towns, and collect ragged losels enough; every one of whom, if once dressed in red, and trained a little, will receive fire cheerfully for the small sum of one shilling *per diem*, and have the soul blown out of him at last, with perfect propriety? The Courage that dares only *die* is on the whole no sublime affair; necessary indeed, yet universal; pitiful when it begins to parade itself. On this Globe of ours there are some thirty-six persons that manifest it, seldom with the smallest failure, during every second of time. Nay look at Newgate: do not the offscourings of Creation, when condemned to the gallows as if they were not men but vermin, walk thither with decency, and even to the scowls and hootings of the whole Universe, give their stern good-night in silence? What is to be undergone only

e may undergo; what must be, comes almost of its own
Considered as Duellist, what a poor figure does the
Irish Whiskerando make in comparison with any English
ock, such as you may buy for fifteenpence!
Courage we desire and prize is not the Courage to die
y, but to live manfully. This, when by God's grace it has
ven, lies deep in the soul; like genial heat, fosters all other
and gifts; without it they could not live. In spite of our
rable Waterloos and Peterloos, and such campaigning as
as been, this Courage we allude to, and call the only true
perhaps rarer in these last ages than it has been in any
since the Saxon Invasion under Hengist. Altogether
it can never be among men; otherwise the species Man
o longer for this world: here and there, in all times, under
guises, men are sent hither not only to demonstrate but
it, and testify, as from heart to heart, that it is still possible,
acticable.
ison, in the eighteenth century, and as Man of Letters, was
such; and, in good truth, 'the bravest of the brave.' What
could have more to war with? Yet, as we saw, he yielded
tered not; he fought, and even, such was his blessedness,
ed. Whoso will understand what it is to have a man's heart
ad that, since the time of John Milton, no braver heart had
n any English bosom than Samuel Johnson now bore.
e too that he never called himself brave, never felt himself
so; the more completely *was* so. No Giant Despair, no
ha Death-dance or Sorcerer's-Sabbath of 'Literary Life in
n,' appals this pilgrim; he works resolutely for deliverance;
defiance steps stoutly along. The thing that is given him
he can make himself do; what is to be endured, he can
in silence.
r the great soul of old Samuel, consuming daily his own
unalleviable allotment of misery and toil, shows beside the
limsy little soul of young Boswell; one day flaunting in the
vanity, tarrying by the wine-cup and crying, Aha, the wine
the next day deploring his downpressed, night-shaded, quite
state, and thinking it unkind that the whole movement of
Universe should go on, while *his* digestive-apparatus had
d! We reckon Johnson's 'talent of silence' to be among his
and too rare gifts. Where there is nothing farther to be done,
shall nothing farther be said: like his own poor blind Welsh-

woman, he accomplished somewhat, and also 'endured fifty years of wretchedness with unshaken fortitude.' How grim was Life to him; a sick Prison-house and Doubting-castle! 'His great business,' he would profess, 'was to escape from himself.' Yet towards all this he has taken his position and resolution; can dismiss it all 'with frigid indifference, having little to hope or to fear.' Friends are stupid, and pusillanimous, and parsimonious; 'wearied of his stay, yet offended at his departure:' it is the manner of the world. 'By popular delusion,' remarks he with a gigantic calmness, 'illiterate writers will rise into renown:' it is portion of the History of English Literature; a perennial thing, this same popular delusion; and will—alter the character of the Language.

Closely connected with this quality of Valour, partly as springing from it, partly as protected by it, are the more recognisable qualities of Truthfulness in word and thought, and Honesty in action. There is a reciprocity of influence here: for as the realising of Truthfulness and Honesty is the life-light and great aim of Valour, so without Valour they cannot, in anywise, be realised. Now, in spite of all practical shortcomings, no one that sees into the significance of Johnson will say that his prime object was not Truth. In conversation, doubtless, you may observe him, on occasion, fighting as if for victory;—and must pardon these ebulliences of a careless hour, which were not without temptation and provocation. Remark likewise two things: that such prize-arguings were ever on merely superficial debatable questions; and then that they were argued generally by the fair laws of battle and logic-fence, by one cunning in that same. If their purpose was excusable, their effect was harmless, perhaps beneficial: that of taming noisy mediocrity, and showing it another side of a debatable matter; to see *both* sides of which was, for the first time, to see the Truth of it. In his Writings themselves are errors enough, crabbed prepossessions enough; yet these also of a quite extraneous and accidental nature, nowhere a wilful shutting of the eyes to the Truth. Nay, is there not everywhere a heartfelt discernment, singular, almost admirable, if we consider through what confused conflicting lights and hallucinations it had to be attained, of the highest everlasting Truth, and beginning of all Truths: this namely, that man is ever, and even in the age of Wilkes and Whitefield, a Revelation of God to man; and lives, moves and has his being in Truth only; is either true, or, in strict speech, *is* not at all?

Quite spotless, on the other hand, is Johnson's love of Truth, if

ve look at it as expressed in Practice, as what we have named Honesty of action. 'Clear your mind of Cant;' *clear* it, throw Cant utterly away: such was his emphatic, repeated precept; and did not he himself faithfully conform to it? The Life of this man has been, as it were, turned inside out, and examined with microscopes by friend and foe; yet was there no Lie found in him. His Doings and Writings are not *shows* but *performances:* you may weigh them in the balance, and they will stand weight. Not a line, not a sentence is dishonestly done, is other than it pretends to be. Alas! and he wrote not out of inward inspiration, but to earn his wages: and with that grand perennial tide of 'popular delusion' flowing by; in whose waters he nevertheless refused to fish, to whose rich oyster-beds the dive was too muddy for him. Observe, again, with what innate hatred of Cant, he takes for himself, and offers to others, the lowest possible view of his business, which he followed with such nobleness. Motive for writing he had none, as he often said, but money; and yet he wrote *so.* Into the region of Poetic Art he indeed never rose; there was no *ideal* without him avowing itself in his work: the nobler was that unavowed *ideal* which lay within him, and commanded saying, Work out thy Artisanship in the spirit of an Artist! They who talk loudest about the dignity of Art, and fancy that they too are Artistic guild-brethren, and of the Celestials,—let them consider well what manner of man this was, who felt himself to be only a hired day-labourer. A labourer that was worthy of his hire; that has laboured not as an eye-servant, but as one found faithful! Neither was Johnson in those days perhaps wholly a unique. Time was when, for money, you might have ware: and needed not, in all departments, in that of the Epic Poem, in that of the Blacking-bottle, to rest content with the mere *persuasion* that you had ware. It was a happier time. But as yet the seventh Apocalyptic Bladder (of PUFFERY) had not been rent open,—to whirl and grind, as in a West-Indian Tornado, all earthly trades and things into wreck, and dust, and consummation,—and regeneration. Be it quickly, since it must be!—

That Mercy can dwell only with Valour, is an old sentiment or proposition; which in Johnson again receives confirmation. Few men on record have had a more merciful, tenderly affectionate nature than old Samuel. He was called the Bear; and did indeed too often look, and roar, like one; being forced to it in his own defence: yet within that shaggy exterior of his there beat a heart warm as a mother's, soft as a little child's. Nay generally, his very

roaring was but the anger of affection: the rage of a Bear, if you will; but of a Bear bereaved of her whelps. Touch his Religion, glance at the Church of England, or the Divine Right; and he was upon you! These things were his Symbols of all that was good and precious for men; his very Ark of the Covenant: whoso laid hand on them tore asunder his heart of hearts. Not out of hatred to the opponent, but of love to the thing opposed, did Johnson grow cruel, fiercely contradictory: this is an important distinction; never to be forgotten in our censure of his conversational outrages. But observe also with what humanity, what openness of love, he can attach himself to all things: to a blind old woman, to a Doctor Levett, to a cat 'Hodge.' 'His thoughts in the latter part of his 'life were frequently employed on his deceased friends; he often 'muttered these or suchlike sentences: "Poor man! and then 'he died."' How he patiently converts his poor home into a Lazaretto; endures, for long years, the contradiction of the miserable and unreasonable; with him unconnected, save that they had no other to yield them refuge! Generous old man! Worldly possession he has little; yet of this he gives freely; from his own hard-earned shilling, the halfpence for the poor, that 'waited his coming out,' are not withheld: the poor 'waited the coming out' of one not quite so poor! A Sterne can write sentimentalities on Dead Asses: Johnson has a rough voice; but he finds the wretched Daughter of Vice fallen down in the streets; carries her home on his own shoulders, and like a good Samaritan gives help to the help-needing, worthy or unworthy. Ought not Charity, even in that sense, to cover a multitude of sins? No Penny-a-week Committee-Lady, no manager of Soup-Kitchens, dancer at Charity-Balls, was this rugged, stern-visaged man: but where, in all England, could there have been found another soul so full of Pity, a hand so heaven-like bounteous as his? The widow's mite, we know, was greater than all the other gifts.

Perhaps it is this divine feeling of Affection, throughout manifested, that principally attracts us towards Johnson. A true brother of men is he; and filial lover of the Earth; who, with little bright spots of Attachment, 'where lives and works some 'loved one,' has beautified 'this rough solitary Earth into a peopled 'garden.' Lichfield, with its mostly dull and limited inhabitants, is to the last one of the sunny islets for him: *Salve magna parens!* Or read those Letters on his Mother's death: what a genuine solemn grief and pity lies recorded there; a looking back into the

unspeakably mournful, unspeakably tender. And yet calm, ne; for he must now act, not look: his venerated Mother has taken from him; but he must now write a *Rasselas* to defray neral! Again in this little incident, recorded in his Book of tion, are not the tones of sacred Sorrow and Greatness deeper in many a blank-verse Tragedy;—as, indeed, 'the fifth act of gedy,' though unrhymed, does 'lie in every death-bed, were it sant's, and of straw:'

nday, October 18, 1767. Yesterday, at about ten in the morning, t my leave forever of my dear old friend, Catherine Chambers, who to live with my mother about 1724, and has been but little parted us since. She buried my father, my brother and my mother. She w fifty-eight years old.
desired all to withdraw; then told her that we were to part forever; is Christians, we should part with prayer; and that I would, if she villing, say a short prayer beside her. She expressed great desire to me; and held up her poor hands as she lay in bed, with great fervour, I prayed kneeling by her. * * *
then kissed her. She told me that to part was the greatest pain ad ever felt, and that she hoped we should meet again in a better . I expressed, with swelled eyes and great emotion of tenderness, me hopes. We kissed and parted; I humbly hope, to meet again, o part no more.'

ars trickling down the granite rock: a soft well of Pity gs within!—Still more tragical is this other scene: 'John- mentioned that he could not in general accuse himself of ing been an undutiful son. "Once, indeed," said he, "I was bedient: I refused to attend my father to Uttoxeter market. le was the source of that refusal, and the remembrance of it painful. A few years ago I desired to atone for this fault." it by what method?—What method was now possible? Hear he words are again given as his own, though here evidently less capable reporter:

fadam, I beg your pardon for the abruptness of my departure in orning, but I was compelled to it by conscience. Fifty years ago, m, on this day, I committed a breach of filial piety. My father een in the habit of attending Uttoxeter market, and opening a stall for the sale of his Books. Confined by indisposition, he desired hat day, to go and attend the stall in his place. My pride pre- d me; I gave my father a refusal.—And now today I have been

at Uttoxeter; I went into the market at the time of business, uncovered my head, and stood with it bare, for an hour, on the spot where my father's stall used to stand. In contrition I stood, and I hope the penance was expiatory.'

Who does not figure to himself this spectacle, amid the 'rainy weather, and the sneers,' or wonder, 'of the bystanders'? The memory of old Michael Johnson, rising from the far distance; sad-beckoning in the 'moonlight of memory:' how he had toiled faithfully hither and thither; patiently among the lowest of the low; been buffeted and beaten down, yet ever risen again, ever tried it anew—And oh, when the wearied old man, as Bookseller, or Hawker, or Tinker, or whatsoever it was that Fate had reduced him to, begged help of *thee* for one day,—how savage, diabolic, was that mean Vanity, which answered, No! He sleeps now; after life's fitful fever, he sleeps well: but thou, O Merciless, how now wilt thou still the sting of that remembrance?—The picture of Samuel Johnson standing bareheaded in the market there, is one of the grandest and saddest we can paint. Repentance! Repentance! he proclaims, as with passionate sobs: but only to the ear of Heaven, if Heaven will give him audience: the earthly ear and heart, that should have heard it, are now closed, unresponsive forever.

That this so keen-loving, soft-trembling Affectionateness, the inmost essence of his being, must have looked forth, in one form or another, through Johnson's whole character, practical and intellectual, modifying both, is not to be doubted. Yet through what singular distortions and superstitions, moping melancholies, blind habits, whims about 'entering with the right foot,' and 'touching every post as he walked along;' and all the other mad chaotic lumber of a brain that, with sun-clear intellect, hovered forever on the verge of insanity,—must that same inmost essence have looked forth; unrecognisable to all but the most observant! Accordingly it was not recognised; Johnson passed not for a fine nature, but for a dull, almost brutal one. Might not, for example, the first-fruit of such a Lovingness, coupled with his quick Insight, have been expected to be a peculiarly courteous demeanour as man among men? In Johnson's 'Politeness,' which he often, to the wonder of some, asserted to be great, there was indeed somewhat that needed explanation. Nevertheless, if he insisted always on handing lady-visitors to their carriage; though with the certainty

collecting a mob of gazers in Fleet Street,—as might well the beau having on, by way of court-dress, 'his rusty brown orning suit, a pair of old shoes for slippers, a little shrivelled ig sticking on the top of his head, and the sleeves of his shirt id the knees of his breeches hanging loose:'—in all this we can the spirit of true Politeness, only shining through a strange dium. Thus again, in his apartments, at one time, there were ortunately no chairs. 'A gentleman who frequently visited m whilst writing his *Idlers*, constantly found him at his desk, ting on one with three legs; and on rising from it, he remarked at Johnson never forgot its defect; but would either hold it in s hand, or place it with great composure against some support; king no notice of its imperfection to his visitor,'—who meanile, we suppose, sat upon folios, or in the sartorial fashion. 'It as remarkable in Johnson,' continues Miss Reynolds (*Renny r*), 'that no external circumstances ever prompted him to make ıy apology, or to seem even sensible of their existence. Whether ıis was the effect of philosophic pride, or of some partial notion his respecting high-breeding, is doubtful.' That it *was*, for one ng, the effect of genuine Politeness, is nowise doubtful. Not the Pharisaical Brummellean Politeness, which would suffer ıcifixion rather than ask twice for soup: but the noble universal liteness of a man that knows the dignity of men, and feels his n; such as may be seen in the patriarchal bearing of an Indian chem; such as Johnson himself exhibited, when a sudden chance ought him into dialogue with his King. To us, with our view the man, it nowise appears 'strange' that he should have asted himself cunning in the laws of Politeness; nor 'stranger ll,' habitually attentive to practise them.

More legibly is this influence of the Loving heart to be traced in ı intellectual character. What, indeed, is the beginning of intellect, e first inducement to the exercise thereof, but attraction towards mewhat, *affection* for it? Thus too, who ever saw, or will see, y true talent, not to speak of genius, the foundation of which not goodness, love? From Johnson's strength of Affection, we duce many of his intellectual peculiarities; especially that reatening array of perversions, known under the name of 'Johnn's Prejudices.' Looking well into the root from which these rang, we have long ceased to view them with hostility, can rdon and reverently pity them. Consider with what force early-ıbibed opinions must have clung to a soul of this Affection.

Those evil-famed Prejudices of his, that Jacobitism, Church-of-Englandism, hatred of the Scotch, belief in Witches, and suchlike, what were they but the ordinary beliefs of well-doing, well-meaning provincial Englishmen in that day? First gathered by his Father's hearth; round the kind 'country fires' of native Staffordshire; they grew with his growth and strengthened with his strength: they were hallowed by fondest sacred recollections; to part with them was parting with his heart's blood. If the man who has no strength of Affection, strength of Belief, have no strength of Prejudice, let him thank Heaven for it, but to himself take small thanks.

Melancholy it was, indeed, that the noble Johnson could not work himself loose from these adhesions; that he could only purify them, and wear them with some nobleness. Yet let us understand how they grew out from the very centre of his being: nay moreover, how they came to cohere in him with what formed the business and worth of his Life, the sum of his whole Spiritual Endeavour. For it is on the same ground that he became throughout an Edifier and Repairer, not, as the others of his make were, a Puller-down; that in an age of universal Scepticism, England was still to produce its Believer. Mark too his candour even here; while a Dr. Adams, with placid surprise, asks, "Have we not evidence enough of the soul's immortality?" Johnson answers, "I wish for more."

But the truth is, in Prejudice, as in all things, Johnson was the product of England; one of those *good* yeomen whose limbs were made in England: alas, the last of *such* Invincibles, their day being now done! His culture is wholly English; that not of a Thinker but of a 'Scholar:' his interests are wholly English; he sees and knows nothing but England; he is the John Bull of Spiritual Europe: let him live, love him, as he was and could not but be! Pitiable it is, no doubt, that a Samuel Johnson must confute Hume's irreligious Philosophy by some 'story from a Clergyman of the Bishoprick of Durham;' should see nothing in the great Frederick but 'Voltaire's lackey;' in Voltaire himself but a man *acerrimi ingenii, paucarum literarum;* in Rousseau but one worthy to be hanged; and in the universal, long-prepared, inevitable Tendency of European Thought but a green-sick milk-maid's crotchet of, for variety's sake, 'milking the Bull.' Our good, dear John! Observe too what it is that he sees in the city of Paris: no feeblest glimpse of those D'Alemberts and Diderots,

or of the strange questionable work they did; solely some Benedictine Priests, to talk kitchen-latin with them about *Editiones Principes*. "*Monsheer Nongtongpaw!*"—Our dear, foolish John: yet is there a lion's heart within him!—Pitiable all these things were, we say; yet nowise inexcusable; nay, as basis or as foil to much else that was in Johnson, almost venerable. Ought we not, indeed, to honour England, and English Institutions and Way of Life, that they could still equip such a man; could furnish him in heart and head to be a Samuel Johnson, and yet to love them, and unyieldingly fight for them? What truth and living vigour must such Institutions once have had, when, in the middle of the Eighteenth Century, there was still enough left in them for this!

It is worthy of note that, in our little British Isle, the two grand Antagonisms of Europe should have stood embodied, under their very highest concentration, in two men produced simultaneously among ourselves. Samuel Johnson and David Hume, as was observed, were children nearly of the same year: through life they were spectators of the same Life-movement; often inhabitants of the same city. Greater contrast, in all things, between two great men, could not be. Hume, well-born, competently provided for, whole in body and mind, of his own determination forces a way into Literature: Johnson, poor, moonstruck, diseased, forlorn, is forced into it 'with the bayonet of necessity at his back.' And what a part did they severally play there! As Johnson became the father of all succeeding Tories; so was Hume the father of all succeeding Whigs, for his own Jacobitism was but an accident, as worthy to be named Prejudice as any of Johnson's. Again, if Johnson's culture was exclusively English; Hume's, in Scotland, became European;—for which reason too we find his influence spread deeply over all quarters of Europe, traceable deeply in all speculation, French, German, as well as domestic; while Johnson's name, out of England, is hardly anywhere to be met with. In spiritual stature they are almost equal; both great, among the greatest: yet how unlike in likeness! Hume has the widest, methodising, comprehensive eye; Johnson the keenest for perspicacity and minute detail: so had, perhaps chiefly, their education ordered it. Neither of the two rose into Poetry; yet both to some approximation thereof: Hume to something of an Epic clearness and method, as in his delineation of the Commonwealth Wars; Johnson to many a deep Lyric tone of plaintiveness and impetuous graceful power, scattered over his fugitive compositions. Both,

rather to the general surprise, had a certain rugged Humour shining through their earnestness: the indication, indeed, that they *were* earnest men, and had *subdued* their wild world into a kind of temporary home and safe dwelling. Both were, by principle and habit, Stoics: yet Johnson with the greater merit, for he alone had very much to triumph over; farther, he alone ennobled his Stoicism into Devotion. To Johnson Life was as a Prison, to be endured with heroic faith: to Hume it was little more than a foolish Bartholomew-Fair Show-booth, with the foolish crowdings and elbowings of which it was not worth while to quarrel; the whole would break up, and be at liberty, so *soon*. Both realised the highest task of Manhood, that of living like men; each died not unfitly, in his way: Hume as one, with factitious, half-false gaiety, taking leave of what was itself wholly but a Lie: Johnson as one, with awe-struck, yet resolute and piously expectant heart, taking leave of a Reality, to enter a Reality still higher. Johnson had the harder problem of it, from first to last: whether, with some hesitation, we can admit that he was intrinsically the better-gifted, may remain undecided.

These two men now rest; the one in Westminster Abbey here; the other in the Calton-Hill Churchyard of Edinburgh. Through Life they did not meet: as contrasts, 'like in unlike,' love each other; so might they two have loved, and communed kindly,—had not the terrestrial dross and darkness that was in them withstood! One day, their spirits, what Truth was in each, will be found working, living in harmony and free union, even here below. They were the two half-men of their time: whoso should combine the intrepid Candour and decisive scientific Clearness of Hume, with the Reverence, the Love and devout Humility of Johnson, were the whole man of a new time. Till such whole man arrive for us, and the distracted time admit of such, might the Heavens but bless poor England with half-men worthy to tie the shoe-latchets of these, resembling these even from afar! Be both attentively regarded, let the true Effort of both prosper;—and for the present, both take our affectionate farewell!

GOETHE'S WORKS.

GOETHE'S WORKS.[1]

[1832.]

IT is now four years since we specially invited attention to this Book; first in an essay on the graceful little fantasy-piece of *Helena*, then in a more general one on the merits and workings of Goethe himself: since which time two important things have happened in reference to it; for the publication, advancing with successful regularity, reached its fortieth and last volume in 1830; and now, still more emphatically to conclude both this 'completed, final edition,' and all other editions, endeavours and attainments of one in whose hands lay so much, come tidings that the venerable man has been recalled from our earth, and of his long labours and high faithful stewardship we have had what was appointed us.

The greatest epoch in a man's life is not always his death; yet for bystanders, such as contemporaries, it is always the most noticeable. All other epochs are transition-points from one visible condition to another visible; the days of their occurrence are like any other days, from which only the clearer-sighted will distinguish them; bridges they are, over which the smooth highway runs continuous, as if no Rubicon were there. But the day in a mortal's destinies which is like no other is his death-day: here, too, is a transition, what we may call a bridge, as at other epochs; but now from the keystone onwards half the arch rests on invisibility; this is a transition out of visible Time into invisible Eternity.

Since Death, as the palpable revelation (not to be overlooked by the dullest) of the mystery of wonder and depth and fear, which everywhere from beginning to ending through its whole course and movement lies under Life, is in any case so great,—we find it not

[1] FOREIGN QUARTERLY REVIEW, No. 19.—*Goethes Werke. Vollständige Ausgabe letzter Hand* (Goethe's Works. Completed, final Edition), 40 voll. Stuttgard and Tübingen, 1827-30.

unnatural that hereby a new look of greatness, a new interest should be impressed on whatsoever has preceded it and led to it; that even towards some man, whose history did not then first become significant, the world should turn, at his departure, with a quite peculiar earnestness, and now seriously ask itself a question, perhaps never seriously asked before, What the purport and character of his presence here was; now when he has gone hence, and is not present here, and will remain absent forevermore. It is the conclusion that crowns the work; much more the irreversible conclusion wherein all is concluded: thus is there no life so mean but a death will make it memorable.

At all lykewakes, accordingly, the doings and endurances of the Departed are the theme: rude souls, rude tongues grow eloquently busy with him; a whole septuagint of beldames are striving to render, in such dialect as they have, the small bible, or apocrypha, of his existence, for the general perusal. The least famous of mankind will for once become public, and have his name printed, and read not without interest: in the Newspaper Obituaries; on some frail memorial, under which he has crept to sleep. Foolish love-sick girls know that there is one method to impress the obdurate false Lovelace, and wring his bosom; the method of drowning: foolish ruined dandies, whom the tailor will no longer trust, and the world turning on its heel is about forgetting, can recall it to attention by report of pistol; and so, in a worthless death, if in a worthless life no more, reattain the topgallant of renown,—for one day. Death is ever a sublimity and supernatural wonder, were there no other left: the last act of a most strange drama, which is not dramatic, but has now become real; wherein, miraculously, Furies, god-missioned, have in actual person risen from the abyss, and do verily dance there in that terror of all terrors, and wave their dusky-glaring torches, and shake their serpent-hair! Out of which heart-thrilling, so authentically tragic fifth-act there goes, as we said, a new meaning over all the other four; making them likewise tragic and authentic, and memorable in some measure, were they formerly the sorriest pickle-herring farce.

But above all, when a Great Man dies, then has the time come for putting us in mind that he was alive; biographies and biographic sketches, criticisms, characters, anecdotes, reminiscences, issue forth as from opened springing fountains; the world, with a passion whetted by impossibility, will yet a while retain, yet a while speak

with, though only to the unanswering echoes, what it has lost without remedy: thus is the last event of life often the loudest; and real spiritual *Apparitions* (who have been named Men), as false imaginary ones are fabled to do, vanish in thunder.

For ourselves, as regards the great Goethe, if not seeking to be foremost in this natural movement, neither do we shun to mingle in it. The life and ways of such men as he, are, in all seasons, a matter profitable to contemplate, to speak of: if in this death-season, long with a sad reverence looked forward to, there has little increase of light, little change of feeling arisen for the writer, a readier attention, nay a certain expectancy, from some readers is call sufficient. Innumerable meditations and disquisitions on this subject must yet pass through the minds of men; on all sides must it be taken up, by various observers, by successive generations, and ever a new light may evolve itself: why should not this observer, on this side, set down what he partially has seen into; and the necessary process thereby be forwarded, at any rate continued?

A continental Humorist, of deep-piercing, resolute though strangely perverse faculty, whose works are as yet but sparingly if at all cited in English literature, has written a chapter, somewhat in the nondescript manner of metaphysico-rhetorical, homiletic-exegetic rhapsody, on the *Greatness of Great Men;* which topic we agree with him in reckoning one of the most pregnant. The time, indeed, is come when much that was once found visibly subsistent Without must anew be sought for Within; many a human feeling, indestructible and to man's well-being indispensable, which once manifested itself in expressive forms to the Sense, now lies hidden in the *formless* depths of the Spirit, or at best struggles out obscurely in forms become superannuated, altogether inexpressive and unrecognisable; from which paralysed imprisoned state, often the best effort of the thinker is required, and moreover were well applied, to deliver it. For if the Present is to be the 'living sum-total of the whole Past,' nothing that ever lived in the Past must be let wholly die; whatsoever was done, whatsoever was said or written aforetime was done and written for our edification. In such state of imprisonment, paralysis and unrecognisable defacement, as compared with its condition in the old ages, lies this our feeling towards great men; wherein, and in the much else that belongs to it, some of the deepest human interests will be found involved. A few words from Herr Professor Teufelsdröckh, if they help to set this preliminary matter in a clearer light, may be worth trans-

lating here. Let us first remark with him, however, 'how wonderful in all cases, great or little, is the importance of man to man:'

'Deny it as he will,' says Teufelsdröckh, 'man reverently loves 'man, and daily by action evidences his belief in the divineness of 'man. What a more than regal mystery encircles the poorest of 'living souls for us! The highest is not independent of him; his 'suffrage has value: could the highest monarch convince himself 'that the humblest beggar with sincere mind despised him, no 'serried ranks of halberdiers and bodyguards could shut out some 'little twinge of pain; some emanation from the low had pierced 'into the bosom of the high. Of a truth, men are mystically united; 'a mystic bond of brotherhood makes all men one.

'Thus too has that fierce false hunting after Popularity, which 'you often wonder at, and laugh at, a basis on something true: nay, 'under the other aspect, what is that wonderful spirit of Inter-'ference, were it but manifested as the paltriest scandal and tea-'table backbiting, other than inversely or directly, a heartfelt 'indestructible sympathy of man with man? Hatred itself is but 'an inverse love. The philosopher's wife complained to the philo-'sopher that certain two-legged animals without feathers spake evil 'of him, spitefully criticised his goings out and comings in; wherein 'she too failed not of her share: "Light of my life," answered the 'philosopher, "it is their love of us, unknown to themselves, and 'taking a foolish shape; thank them for it, and do thou love them 'more wisely. Were we mere steam-engines working here under 'this rooftree, they would scorn to speak of us once in a twelve-'month." The last stage of human perversion, it has been said, is 'when sympathy corrupts itself into envy; and the indestructible 'interest we take in men's doings has become a joy over their faults 'and misfortunes: this is the last and lowest stage; lower than 'this we cannot go: the absolute petrifaction of indifference is not 'attainable on this side total death.

'And now,' continues the Professor, 'rising from these lowest 'tea-table regions of human communion into the higher and highest, 'is there not still in the world's demeanour towards Great Men, 'enough to make the old practice of *Hero-worship* intelligible, nay 'significant? Simpleton! I tell thee Hero-worship still continues; 'it is the only creed which never and nowhere grows or can grow 'obsolete. For always and everywhere this remains a true saying: '*Il y a dans le cœur humain un fibre religieux.* Man always *worships*

'something; always he sees the Infinite shadowed forth in some-'thing finite; and indeed can and must so see it in *any* finite thing, 'once tempt him well to *fix* his eyes thereon. Yes, in practice, be 'it in theory or not, we are all Supernaturalists; and have an 'infinite happiness or an infinite woe not only waiting us hereafter, 'but looking out on us through any pitifulest present good or evil; '—as, for example, on a high poetic Byron through his lameness; 'as on all young souls through their first lovesuit; as on older souls, 'still more foolishly, through many a lawsuit, paper-battle, political 'horse-race or ass-race. Atheism, it has been said, is impossible; 'and truly, if we will consider it, no Atheist denies a Divinity, but 'only some NAME (*Nomen, Numen*) of a Divinity: the God is still 'present there, working in that benighted heart, were it only as a 'god of darkness. Thousands of stern Sansculottes, to seek no other 'instance, go chanting martyr-hymns to their guillotine: these 'spurn at the name of a God; yet worship one (as hapless "Prose-'lytes without the Gate") under the new pseudonym of Freedom. 'What indeed is all this that is called political fanaticism, revo-'lutionary madness, force of hatred, force of love and so forth, but 'merely, under new designations, that same wondrous, wonder-'working reflex from the Infinite, which in all times has given the 'Finite its empyrean or tartarean hue, thereby its blessedness or 'cursedness, its marketable worth or unworth?

'Remark, however, as illustrative of several things, and more to 'the purpose here, that man does in strict speech always remain 'the clearest symbol of the Divinity to man. Friend Novalis, the 'devoutest heart I knew, and of purest depth, has not scrupled to 'call man, what the Divine Man is called in Scripture, a "Reve-'lation in the Flesh." "There is but one temple in the world," 'says he, "and that is the body of man. Bending before men is a 'reverence done to this revelation in the flesh. We touch heaven 'when we lay our hand on a human body." In which notable 'words a reader that meditates them may find such meaning and 'scientific accuracy as will surprise him.

'The ages of superstition, it appears to be sufficiently known, 'are behind us. To no man, were he never so heroic, are shrines 'any more built, and vows offered as to one having supernatural 'power. The sphere of the TRANSCENDENTAL cannot now, by that 'avenue of heroic worth, of eloquent wisdom, or by any other 'avenue, be so easily reached. The worth that in these days could '*transcend* all estimate or survey, and lead men willingly captive

'into *infinite* admiration, into worship, is still waited for (with little 'hope) from the unseen Time. All that can be said to offer itself 'in that kind, at present, is some slight household devotion (*Haus-'Andacht*), whereby this or the other enthusiast, privately in all 'quietness, can love his hero or sage without measure, and idealise, 'and so, in a sense, idolise him;—which practice, as man is by 'necessity an idol-worshipper (no offence in him *so* long as *idol* 'means accurately *vision*, clear *symbol*), and all wicked idolatry is 'but a *more* idolatrous worship, may be excusable, in certain cases 'praiseworthy. Be this as it will, let the curious eye gratify itself 'in observing how the old antediluvian feeling still, though now 'struggling out so imperfectly, and forced into unexpected shapes, 'asserts its existence in the newest man: and the Chaldeans or old 'Persians, with their Zerdusht, differ only in vesture and dialect 'from the French, with their Voltaire *étouffé sous des roses.*'[2]

This, doubtless, is a wonderful phraseology, but referable, as the Professor urges, to that capacious reservoir and convenience, 'the nature of the time:' 'A time,' says he, 'when, as in some Destruc-'tion of a Roman Empire, wrecks of old things are everywhere 'confusedly jumbled with rudiments of new; so that, till once the 'mixture and amalgamation be complete, and even have long con-'tinued complete and universally apparent, no grammatical *langue 'd'oc* or *langue d'oui* can establish itself, but only some barbarous 'mixed *lingua rustica*, more like a jargon than a language, must 'prevail; and thus the deepest matters be either barbarously spoken 'of, or wholly omitted and lost sight of, which were still worse.' But to let the Homily proceed:

'Consider, at any rate,' continues he elsewhere, 'under how many 'categories, down to the most impertinent, the world inquires 'concerning Great Men, and never wearies striving to represent to 'itself their whole structure, aspect, procedure, outward and inward! 'Blame not the world for such minutest curiosity about its great 'ones: this comes of the world's old-established necessity to wor-'ship: and, indeed, whom but its great ones, that "like celestial 'fire-pillars go before it on the march," ought it to worship? Blame 'not even that mistaken worship of sham great ones, that are not 'celestial fire-pillars, but terrestrial glass-lanterns with wick and 'tallow, under no guidance but a stupid fatuous one; of which 'worship the litanies and gossip-homilies are, in some quarters of

[2] *Die Kleider: ihr Werden und Wirken.* Von D. TEUFELSDRÖCKH. Weis-nichtwo, Stillschweign'sche Buchhandlung, 1830.

the globe, so inexpressibly uninteresting. Blame it not; pity it rather, with a certain loving respect.

'Man is never, let me assure thee, altogether a clothes-horse: under the clothes there is always a body and a soul. The Count von Bügeleisen, so idolised by our fashionable classes, is not, as the English Swift asserts, created wholly by the Tailor; but partially also by the supernatural Powers. His beautifully-cut apparel, and graceful expensive tackle and environment of all kinds, are but the symbols of a beauty and gracefulness, supposed to be inherent in the Count himself; under which predicament come also our reverence for his counthood, and in good part that other notable phenomenon of his being worshipped because he *is* worshipped, of one idolater, sheep-like, running after him, because many have already run. Nay, on what other principle but this latter hast thou, O reader (if thou be not one of a thousand), read, for example, thy *Homer*, and found some real joy therein? All these things, I say, the apparel, the counthood, the existing popularity and whatever else can combine there, are symbols;—bank-notes, which, whether there be gold behind them, or only bankruptcy and empty drawers, pass current for gold. But how, now, could they so pass, if gold itself were not prized, and believed and known to be somewhere extant? Produce the actual gold visibly, and mark how, in these distrustful days, your most accredited bank-paper stagnates in the market! No Holy Alliance, though plush and gilding and genealogical parchment, to the utmost that the time yields, be hung round it, can gain for itself a dominion in the heart of any man; some thirty or forty millions of men's hearts being, on the other hand, subdued into loyal reverence by a Corsican Lieutenant of Artillery. Such is the difference between God-creation and Tailor-creation. Great is the Tailor, but not the greatest. So, too, in matters spiritual, what avails it that a man be Doctor of the Sorbonne, Doctor of Laws, of Both Laws; and can cover half a square foot in pica-type with the list of his 'fellowships, arranged as equilateral triangle, at the vertex an "&c." 'over and above, and with the parchment of his diplomas could 'thatch the whole street he lives in: what avails it? The man is 'but an owl; of prepossessing gravity, indeed; much respected by 'simple neighbours; but to whose sorrowful hootings no creature 'hastens, eager to listen. While, again, let but some riding gauger 'arrive under cloud of night at a Scottish inn, and word be 'whispered that it is Robert Burns; in few instants all beds and

'trucklebeds, from garret to cellar, are left vacant, and gentle and 'simple, with open eyes and erect ears, are gathered together.'

Whereby, at least, from amid this questionable *lingua*, 'more like a jargon than a language,' so much may have become apparent: What unspeakable importance the world attaches, has ever attached (expressing the same by all possible methods) and will ever attach, to its great men. Deep and venerable, whether looked at in the Teufelsdröckh manner or otherwise, is this love of men for great men, this their exclusive admiration of great men; a quality of vast significance, if we consider it well; for, as in its origin it reaches up into the highest and even holiest provinces of man's nature, so in his practical history it will be found to play the most surprising part. Does not, for one example, the fact of such a temper indestructibly existing in all men, point out man as an essentially governable and teachable creature, and forever refute that calumny of his being by nature insubordinate, prone to rebellion? Men seldom, or rather never for a length of time and deliberately, rebel against anything that does not deserve rebelling against. Ready, ever zealous is the obedience and devotedness they show to the great, to the really high; prostrating their whole possession and self, body, heart, soul and spirit, under the feet of whatsoever is authentically above them. Nay, in most times, it is rather a slavish devotedness to those who only seem and pretend to be above them that constitutes their fault.

But why seek special instances? Is not Love, from of old, known to be the beginning of all things? And what is admiration of the great but love of the truly lovable? The first product of love is *imitation*, that all-important peculiar gift of man, whereby Mankind is not only held socially together in the present time, but connected in like union with the past and the future; so that the attainment of the innumerable Departed can be conveyed down to the Living, and transmitted with increase to the Unborn. Now great men, in particular spiritually great men (for all men have a spirit to guide, though all have not kingdoms to govern and battles to fight), are the men universally imitated and learned of, the glass in which whole generations survey and shape themselves.

Thus is the Great Man of an age, beyond comparison, the most important phenomenon therein; all other phenomena, were they Waterloo Victories, Constitutions of the Year One, glorious revolutions, new births of the golden age in what sort you will, are small

trivial. Alas, all these pass away, and are left extinct behind, the tar-barrels they were celebrated with; and the new-born len age proves always to be stillborn: neither is there, was re or will there be any other golden age possible, save only in : in new increase of worth and wisdom;—that is to say, there-, in the new arrival among us of wise and worthy men. Such vals are the great occurrences, though unnoticed ones; all else t can occur, in what kind soever, is but the *road*, up-hill or n-hill, rougher or smoother; nowise the *power* that will nerve for travelling forward thereon. So little comparatively can thought or the cunningest mechanical precontrivance do for ation, for a world! Ever must we wait on the bounty of ne, and see what leader shall be born for us, and whither he l lead.

Thus too, in defect of great men, noted men become important: Noted Man of an age is the emblem and living summary of Ideal which that age has fashioned for itself: show me the ed man of an age, you show me the age that produced him. ch figures walk in the van, for great good or for great evil; not leading, then driven and still farther misleading. The theosis of Beau Brummel has marred many a pretty youth; ded him not at any *goal* where oak garlands, earned by faithful our and valour, carry men to the immortal gods; but, by a al inversion, at the King's Bench *gaol*, where he that has never ved shall not any longer reap, still less any longer burn his barn, t scrape himself with potsherds among the ashes thereof, and sider with all deliberation 'what he wanted, and what he wants.' To enlighten this principle of reverence for the great, to teach reverence, and whom we are to revere and admire, should ever a chief aim of Education (indeed it is herein that instruction perly both begins and ends); and in these late ages, perhaps re than ever, so indispensable is now our need of clear rever-ce, so inexpressibly poor our supply. 'Clear reverence!' it was ce responded to a seeker of light; 'all want it, perhaps thou yself.' What wretched idols, of Leeds cloth, stuffed out with n of one kind or other, do men either worship, or being tired worshipping (so expensively without fruit), rend in pieces and k out of doors, amid loud shouting and crowing, what they call emendous cheers,' as if the feat were miraculous! In private e, as in public, delusion in this sort does its work; the blind ding the blind, both fall into the ditch.

'For, alas,' cries Teufelsdröckh on this occasion, 'though in sus-
'ceptive hearts it is felt that a great man is unspeakably great,
'the specific marks of him are mournfully mistaken: thus must
'innumerable pilgrims journey, in toil and hope, to shrines where
'there is no healing. On the fairer half of the creation, above all,
'such error presses hard. Women are born worshippers; in their
'good little hearts lies the most craving relish for greatness: it is
'even said, each chooses her husband on the hypothesis of his
'being a great man—in his way. The good creatures, yet the
'foolish! For their choices, no insight, or next to none, being
'vouchsafed them, are unutterable. Yet how touching also to see,
'for example, Parisian ladies of quality, all rustling in silks and
'laces, visit the condemned-cell of a fierce Cartouche; and in
'silver accents, and with the looks of angels, beg locks of hair from
'him; as from the greatest, were it only in the profession of high-
'wayman! Still more fatal is that other mistake, the commonest
'of all, whereby the devotional youth, seeking for a great man to
'worship, finds such within his own worthy person, and proceeds
'with all zeal to worship *there*. Unhappy enough: to realise, in
'an age of such gas-light illumination, this basest superstition of
'the ages of Egyptian darkness!

'Remark, however, not without emotion, that of all rituals and
'divine services and ordinances ever instituted for the worship of
'any god, this of Self-worship is the ritual most faithfully observed.
'Trouble enough has the Hindoo devotee, with his washings and
'cookings and perplexed formularies, tying him up at every
'function of his existence: but is it greater trouble than that of
'his German self-worshipping brother; is it trouble even by the
'devoutest Fakir, so honestly undertaken and fulfilled? I answer,
'No; for the German's heart is in it. The German worshipper,
'for whom does he work, and scheme, and struggle, and fight, at
'his rising up and lying down, in all times and places, but for his
'god only? Can he escape from that divine presence of Self;
'can his heart waver, or his hand wax faint in that sacred service?
'The Hebrew Jonah, prophet as he was, rather than take a message
'to Nineveh, took ship to Tarshish, hoping to hide there from his
'Sender; but in what ship-hull or whale's belly shall the madder
'German Jonah cherish hope of hiding from—Himself! Consider,
'too, the temples he builds, and the services of (shoulder-knotted)
'priests he ordains and maintains; the smoking sacrifices, thrice
'a day or oftener, with perhaps a psalmist or two of broken-winded

laureats and literators, if such are to be had. Nor are his votive gifts wanting, of rings and jewels and gold embroideries, such as our Lady of Loretto might grow yellower to look upon. A toilsome, perpetual worship, heroically gone through: and then with what issue? Alas, with the worst. The old Egyptian leek-worshipper had, it is to be hoped, seasons of light and faith: his leek-god seems to smile on him; he is humbled, and in humility exalted, before the majesty of something, were it only that of germinative Physical Nature, seen through a germinating, not unnourishing potherb. The Self-worshipper, again, has no seasons of light, which are not of blue sulphur-light; hungry, envious pride, not humility in any sort, is the ashy fruit of his worship; his self-god growls on him with the perpetual wolf-cry, Give! Give! and your devout Byron, as the Frau Hunt, with a wise simplicity (*geistreich naiv*), once said, "must sit sulking like a great schoolboy, in pet because they have given him a plain bun and not a spiced one."—His bun was a life-rent of God's universe, with the tasks it offered, and the tools to do them with; *à priori*, one might have fancied it could be put up with for once.'

After which wondrous glimpses into the Teufelsdröckh Homily on the *Greatness of Great Men*, it may now be high time to proceed with the matter more in hand; and remark that our own much-alumniated age, so fruitful in noted men, is also not without its great. In noted men, undoubtedly enough, we surpass all ages since the creation of the world; and from two plain causes: First, that there has been a French Revolution, and that there is now pretty rapidly proceeding a European Revolution; whereby everything, as in the Term-day of a great city, when all mortals are removing, has been, so to speak, set out into the street; and many a foolish vessel of dishonour, unnoticed and worth no notice in its own dark corner, has become universally recognisable when once mounted on the summit of some furniture-wagon, and tottering there (as Committee-president, or other head-director), with what is put under it, slowly onwards to its new lodging and arrangement, itself, alas, hardly to get thither without *breakage*. Secondly, that the Printing Press, with stitched and loose leaves, has now come into full action; and makes, as it were, a sort of universal daylight, for removal and revolution and everything else to proceed in, far more commodiously, yet also far more conspicuously. A

complaint has accordingly been heard that famous men abound, that we are quite overrun with famous men: however, the remedy lies in the disease itself; crowded succession already means quick oblivion. For wagon after wagon rolls off, and either arrives or is overset; and so, in either case, the vessel of dishonour, which, at worst, we saw only in crossing some street, will afflict us no more.

Of great men, among so many millions of noted men, it is computed that in our time there have been Two; one in the practical, another in the speculative province: Napoleon Buonaparte and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. In which dual number, inconsiderable as it is, our time may perhaps specially pride itself, and take precedence of many others; in particular, reckon itself the flower-time of the whole last century and half. Every age will, no doubt, have its superior man or men; but one *so* superior as to take rank among the high of all ages, this is what we call a great man; this rarely makes his appearance, such bounty of Nature and Accident must combine to produce and unfold him. Of Napoleon and his works all ends of the world have heard: for *such* a host marched not in silence through the frighted deep: few heads there are in this Planet which have not formed to themselves some featured or featureless image of him; his history has been written about, on the great scale and on the small, some millions of times, and still remains to be written: one of our highest literary problems. For such a 'light-nimbus' of glory and renown encircled the man; the environment he walked in was itself so stupendous, that the eye grew dazzled, and mistook his proportions; or quite turned away from him in pain and temporary blindness. Thus even among the clear-sighted there is no unanimity about Napoleon; and only here and there does his own greatness begin to be interpreted, and accurately separated from the mere greatness of his fame and fortune.

Goethe, again, though of longer continuance in the world, and intrinsically of much more unquestionable greatness and even importance there, could not be so noted by the world: for if the explosion of powder-mines and artillery-parks naturally attracts every eye and ear; the approach of a new-created star (dawning on us, in new-created radiance, from the eternal Deeps!), though *this*, and not the artillery-parks, is to shape our destiny and *rule* the lower earth, is notable at first only to certain stargazers and weather-prophets. Among ourselves especially, Goethe had little

recognition: indeed, it was only of late that his existence, as a man and not as a mere sound, became authentically known to us; and some shadow of his high endowments and endeavours, and of the high meaning that might lie therein, arose in the general mind of England, even of intelligent England. Five years ago, to rank him with Napoleon, like him as rising unattainable beyond his class, like him and more than he of quite peculiar moment to all Europe, would have seemed a wonderful procedure; candour even, and enlightened liberality, to grant him place beside this and the other home-born ready-writer, blessed with that special privilege of 'English cultivation,' and able thereby to write novels, heart-captivating, heart-rending, or of enchaining interest.

Since which time, however, let us say, the progress of clearer apprehension has been rapid and satisfactory: innumerable unmusical voices have already fallen silent on this matter; for in fowls of every feather, even in the pertest choughs and thievish magpies, there dwells a singular reverence of the eagle; no Dulness is so courageous, but if you once show it any gleam of a heavenly Resplendence, it will, at lowest, shut its eyes and say nothing. So fares it here with the old-established British critic; who, indeed, in these days of ours, begins to be strangely situated; so many new things rising on his horizon, black indefinable shapes, magical or not; the old brickfield (where he kneaded insufficient marketable bricks) all stirring under his feet; preternatural, mad-making tones in the earth and air;—with all which what shall an old-established British critic and brickmaker do, but, at wisest, put his hands in his pockets, and, with the face and heart of a British mastiff, though amid dismal enough forebodings, see what it will turn to?

In the younger, more hopeful minds, again, in most minds that can be considered as in a state of growth, German literature is taking its due place: in such, and in generations of other such that are to follow them, some thankful appreciation of the greatest in German literature cannot fail; at all events this feeling that he is great and the greatest, whereby appreciation, and what alone is of much value, appropriation, first becomes rightly possible. To forward such on their way towards appropriating what excellence this man realised and created for them, somewhat has already been done, yet not much; much still waits to be done. The field, indeed, is large: there are Forty Volumes of the most significant Writing that has been produced for the last two centuries; there is the whole long Life and heroic Character of him who produced

them; all this to expatiate over and inquire into; in both which departments the deepest thinker, and most far-sighted, may find scope enough.

Nevertheless, in these days of the ten-pound franchise, when all the world (perceiving now, like the Irish innkeeper, that 'death and destruction are just coming in') will have itself represented in parliament; and the wits of so many are gone in this direction to gather wool, and must needs return more or less shorn; it were foolish to invite either young or old into great depths of thought on such a remote matter; the tendency of which is neither for the Reform Bill nor against it, but quietly *through* it and beyond it; nowise to prescribe this or that mode of *electing* members, but only to produce a few members *worth* electing. Not for many years (who knows how many!) in these harassed, hand-to-mouth circumstances, can the world's bleared eyes open themselves to study the true import of such topics; of this topic, the highest of such. As things actually stand, some quite cursory glances, and considerations close on the surface, to remind a few (unelected, unelective) parties interested, that it lies over for study, are all that can be attempted here: could we, by any method, in any measure, disclose for such the wondrous wonder-working *element* it hovers in, the *light* it is to be studied and inquired-after in, what is needfulest at present were accomplished.

One class of considerations, near enough the surface, we avoid; all that partakes of an elegiac character. True enough, nothing can be *done* or suffered, but there is something to be *said*, wisely or unwisely. The departure of our Greatest contemporary Man could not be other than a great event; fitted to awaken, in all who with understanding beheld it, feelings sad, but high and sacred, of mortality and immortality, of mourning and of triumph; far lookings into the Past and into the Future,—so many changes, fearful and wonderful, of fleeting Time; glimpses too of the Eternity these rest on, which knows no change. At the present date and distance, however, all this pertains not to us; has been uttered elsewhere, or may be left for utterance there. Let us consider the Exequies as past; that the high Rogus, with its sweet-scented wood, amid the wail of music eloquent to speechless hearts, has flamed aloft, heaven-kissing, in sight of all the Greeks; and that now the ashes of the Hero are gathered into their urn, and the host has marched onwards to new victories and new toils; ever to be mindful of the dead, not to mourn for him any more.

st of the Greeks, in this case, was all thinking Europe: their funeral games were appropriate and worthy, we stop nquire; the time, in regard to such things, is empty or ill-l, and this was what the time could conveniently do. All ıtion and solemn cremation are gone by; and as yet nothing , nothing that does not border upon parody, has appeared in om. A Bentham bequeaths his remains to be lectured over hool of anatomy; and perhaps, even in this way, finds, as the Utilitarians, a really nobler funeral than any other, he prosaic age, rich only in crapes and hollow scutcheons ver as of words), could have afforded him.

matter in hand being *Goethe's Works*, and the greatest work r man, or rather the summary and net amount of all his being the Life he has led, we ask, as the first question: went with Goethe in that matter; what was the practical f want and fulfilment, of joy and sorrow, from which his l productions grew forth; the characters of which they ıore or less legibly bear? In which sense, those Volumes by him *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, wherein his personal what he has thought fit to make known of it, stands de-l, will long be valuable. A noble commentary, instructive y ways, lies opened there, and yearly increasing in worth erest; which all readers, now when the true quality of it is ned, will rejoice that circumstances induced and allowed write: for surely if old Cellini's counsel have any propriety, ıubly proper in this case: the autobiographic practice he ıends (of which the last century in particular has seen so orthy and worthless examples) was never so much in place

'All men, of what rank soever,' thus counsels the brave uto, 'who have accomplished aught virtuous or virtuous-hould, provided they be conscious of really good purposes, lown their own life: nevertheless, not put hand to so worthy erprise till after they have reached the age of forty.' All ıkase-regulations Goethe had abundantly fulfilled,—the last dantly as any, for he had now reached the age of sixty-two.

year, 1811,' says he, 'distinguishes itself for me by persevering activity. The *Life of Philip Hackert* went to press; the ommitted to me all carefully elaborated as the case required. By I was once more attracted to the South: the occurrences which, period, had befallen me there, in Hackert's company or neighbour-

hood, became alive in the imagination; I had cause to ask, Why this which I was doing for another should not be attempted for myself? I turned, accordingly, before completion of that volume, to my own earliest personal history; and, in truth, found here that I had delayed too long. The work should have been undertaken while my mother yet lived; thereby had I got nigher those scenes of childhood, and been, by her great strength of memory, transported into the midst of them. Now, however, must these vanished apparitions be recalled by my own help; and first, with labour, many an incitement to recollection, like a necessary magic apparatus, be devised. To represent the development of a child who had grown to be remarkable, how this exhibited itself under given circumstances, and yet how in general it could content the student of human nature and his views: such was the thing I had to do.

'In this sense, unpretendingly enough, to a work treated with anxious fidelity, I gave the name *Wahrheit und Dichtung* (Truth and Fiction); deeply convinced that man in immediate Presence, still more in Remembrance, fashions and models the external world according to his own peculiarities.

'The business, as, with historical studying, and otherwise recalling of places and persons, I had much time to spend on it, busied me wheresoever I went or stood, at home and abroad, to such a degree that my actual condition became like a secondary matter; though again, on all hands, when summoned outwards by occasion, I with full force and undivided sense proved myself present.'[3]

These Volumes, with what other supplementary matter has been added to them (the rather as Goethe's was a life of manifold relation, of the widest connexion with important or elevated persons, not to be carelessly laid before the world, and he had the rare good fortune of arranging all things that regarded even his posthumous concernment with the existing generation, according to his own deliberate judgment), are perhaps likely to be, for a long time, our only authentic reference. By the last will of the deceased, it would seem, all his papers and effects are to lie exactly as they are, till after another twenty years.

Looking now into these magically-recalled scenes of childhood and manhood, the student of human nature will under all manner of shapes, from first to last, note one thing: The singularly complex Possibility offered from without, yet along with it the deep never-failing Force from within, whereby all this is conquered and realised. It was as if accident and primary endowment had con-

[3] *Werke*, xxxii. 62.

spired to produce a character on the great scale; a will is cast abroad into the widest, wildest element, and gifted also in an extreme degree to prevail over this, to fashion this to its own form: in which subordinating and self-fashioning of its circumstances a character properly consists. In external situations, it is true, in occurrences such as could be recited in the Newspapers, Goethe's existence is not more complex than other men's; outwardly rather a pacific smooth existence: but in his inward specialties and depth of faculty and temper, in his position spiritual and temporal towards the world as it was, and the world as he could have wished it, the observant eye may discern complexity, perplexity enough; an extent of data greater, perhaps, than had lain in any life-problem for some centuries. And now, as mentioned, the force for solving this was, in like manner, granted him in extraordinary measure; so that we must say, his possibilities were faithfully and with wonderful success turned into acquisitions; and this man fought the good fight, not only victorious, as all true men are, but victorious without damage, and with an ever-increasing strength for new victory, as only great and happy men are. Not wounds and loss (beyond fast-healing skin-deep wounds) has the unconquerable to suffer; only ever-enduring toil; weariness,—from which, after rest, he will rise stronger than before.

Good fortune, what the world calls good fortune, awaits him from beginning to end; but also a far deeper felicity than this. Such worldly gifts of good fortune are what we call possibilities: happy he that can rule over them; but *doubly* unhappy he that cannot. Only in virtue of good guidance does that same good fortune prove good. Wealth, health, fiery light with Proteus' many-sidedness of mind, peace, honour, length of days: with all this you may make no Goethe, but only some Voltaire; with the most that was fortuitous in all this, make only some short-lived, unhappy, unprofitable Byron.

At no period of the World's History can a gifted man be born when he will not find enough to do; in no circumstances come into life but there will be contradictions for him to reconcile, difficulties which it will task his whole strength to surmount, if his whole strength suffice. Everywhere the human soul stands between a hemisphere of light and another of darkness; on the confines of two everlastingly hostile empires, Necessity and Free-will. A pious adage says, 'the back is made for the burden;' we might with no less truth invert it, and say, the burden was made

for the back. Nay, so perverse is the nature of man, it has in all times been found that an external allotment superior to the common was more dangerous than one inferior; thus for a hundred that can bear adversity, there is hardly one that can bear prosperity.

Of riches, in particular, as of the grossest species of prosperity, the perils are recorded by all moralists; and ever, as of old, must the sad observation from time to time occur: Easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle! Riches in a cultured community are the strangest of things; a power all-moving, yet which any the most powerless and skilless can *put* in motion; they are the *readiest* of possibilities; the readiest to become a great blessing or a great curse. 'Beneath gold thrones and mountains,' says Jean Paul, 'who knows how many giant spirits lie entombed!' The first fruit of riches, especially for the man born rich, is to teach him faith in them, and all but hide from him that there is any other faith: thus is he trained up in the miserable eye-service of what is called Honour, Respectability; instead of a man we have but a *gigman*,—one who 'always kept a gig,' two-wheeled or four-wheeled. Consider, too, what this same gigmanhood issues in; consider that first and most stupendous of gigmen, Phaeton, the son of Sol, who drove the brightest of all conceivable gigs, yet with the sorrowfulest result. Alas, Phaeton was his father's heir; born to attain the highest fortune without earning it: he had *built* no sun-chariot (could not build the simplest wheelbarrow), but could and would insist on *driving* one; and so broke his own stiff neck, sent gig and horses spinning through infinite space, and set the universe on fire!—Or, to speak in more modest figures, Poverty, we may say, surrounds a man with ready-made barriers, which, if they mournfully gall and hamper, do at least prescribe for him and force on him a sort of course and goal; a safe and beaten though a circuitous course; great part of his guidance is secure against fatal error, is withdrawn from *his* control. The rich, again, has his whole life to guide, without goal or barrier, save of his own choosing; and tempted as we have seen, is too likely to guide it ill; often, instead of walking straight forward, as he might, does but, like Jeshurun, wax fat and kick; in which process, it is clear, not the adamantine circle of Necessity whereon the World is built, but only his own limb-bones must go to pieces!—Truly, in plain prose, if we bethink us what a road many a Byron and Mirabeau, especially in these latter generations, have gone, it is proof of

an uncommon inward wealth in Goethe, that the outward wealth, whether of money or other happiness which Fortune offered him, did in no case exceed the power of Nature to appropriate and wholesomely assimilate; that all outward blessedness grew to inward strength, and produced only blessed effects for him. Those 'gold mountains' of Jean Paul, to the giant that *can* rise above them, are excellent, both fortified and speculatory, heights; and do in fact become a *throne*, where happily they have not been a *tomb*.

Goethe's childhood is throughout of riant, joyful character: kind plenty in every sense, security, affection, manifold excitement, instruction encircles him; wholly an element of sun and azure, wherein the young spirit, awakening and attaining, can on all hands richly unfold itself. A beautiful boy, of earnest, lucid, serenely deep nature, with the peaceful completeness yet infinite incessant expansiveness of a boy, has, in the fittest environment, begun to *be:* beautiful he looks and moves; rapid, gracefully prompt, like the son of Maia; wise, noble, like Latona's son: nay (as all men may *now* see) he is, in very truth, a miniature incipient World-Poet; of all heavenly figures the beautifulest we know of that can visit this lower earth. Lovely enough shine for us those young years in old Teutonic Frankfort; mirrored in the far remembrance of the Self-historian, real yet ideal, they are among our most genuine poetic Idyls. No smallest matter is too small for us, when we think *who* it was that did it or suffered it. The little long-clothed urchin, mercurial enough with all his stillness, can throw a whole cargo of new-marketed crockery, piece by piece, from the balcony into the street, when once the feat is suggested to him; and comically shatters cheap delf-ware with the same right hand which tragically wrote and hurled forth the demoniac scorn of Mephistopheles, or as 'right hand' of Faust, 'smote the universe to ruins.' Neither smile more than enough (if thou be wise) that the gray-haired all-experienced man remembers how the boy walked on the Mayn bridge, and 'liked to look at the bright weather-cock' on the barrier there. That foolish piece of gilt wood, there glittering sunlit, with its reflex wavering in the Mayn waters, is awakening quite another glitter in the young gifted soul: is not this foolish sunlit splendour also, now when there is an *eye* to behold it, one of Nature's doings? The eye of the young seer is here, through the paltriest chink, looking into the infinite Splendours of Nature,—where, one day, himself is to enter and dwell.

Goethe's mother appears to have been the more gifted of the parents: a woman of altogether genial character, great spiritual faculty and worth; whom the son, at an after time, put old family friends in mind of. It is gratifying for us that she lived to witness his maturity in works and honours; to know that the little infant she had nursed was grown to be a mighty man, the first man of his nation and time. In the father, as prosperous citizen of Frankfort, skilled in many things; improved by travel, by studies both practical and ornamental; decorated with some diplomatic title, but passing, among his books, paintings, collections and household possessions, social or intellectual, spiritual or material, a quite undiplomatic independent life, we become acquainted with a German, not country- but city-*gentleman* of the last century; a character scarcely ever familiar in our Islands; now perhaps almost obsolete among the Germans too. A positive, methodical man, sound-headed, honest-hearted, sharp-tempered; with an uncommon share of volition, among other things, so that scarcely any obstacle would turn him back, but whatsoever he could not mount over he would struggle round, and in any case *be* at the end of his journey: many or all of whose good qualities passed also over by inheritance; and, in fairer combination, on nobler objects, to the whole world's profit, were seen a second time in action.

Family incidents; house-buildings, or rebuildings; arrivals, departures; in any case, newyear's-days and birthdays, are not wanting; nor city-incidents; many-coloured tumult of Frankfort fairs; Kaisers' coronations, expected and witnessed; or that glorious ceremonial of the yearly *Pfeiffergericht*, wherein the grandfather himself plays so imperial a part. World-incidents too roll forth their billows into the remotest creek, and alter the current there. The Earthquake of Lisbon hurls the little Frankfort boy into wondrous depths of another sort; enunciating dark theological problems, which no theology of his will solve. Direction, instruction, in like manner, awaits him in the Great Frederic's Seven-Years War; especially in that long billeting of King's Lieutenant Comte de Thorane, with his sergeants and adjutants, with his painters and picture-easels, his quick precision and decision, his 'dry gallantry' and stately Spanish bearing;—though collisions with the 'house-father,' whose German house-stairs (though he silently endures the inevitable) were not new-built to be made a French highway of; who besides loves not the French, but the great invincible Fritz they are striving to beat

down. Think, for example, of that singular congratulation on the Victory at Bergen:

'So then, at last, after a restless Passion-week, Passion-Friday, 1759, arrived. A deep stillness announced the approaching storm. We children were forbidden to leave the house; our father had no rest, and went out. The battle began; I mounted to the top story, where the field indeed was still out of my sight, but the thunder of the cannon and the volleys of the small arms could be fully discerned. After some hours, we saw the first tokens of the battle, in a row of wagons, whereon wounded men, in all sorts of sorrowful dismemberment and gesture, were driven softly past us to the Liebfrauen-Kloster, which had been changed into a hospital. The compassion of the citizens forthwith awoke. Beer, wine, bread, money were given to such as had still power of receiving. But when, erelong, wounded and captive Germans also were noticed in that train, the pity had no limits; it seemed as if each were bent to strip himself of whatever movable thing he had, to aid his countrymen therewith in their extremity.

'The prisoners, meanwhile, were the symptoms of a battle unprosperous for the Allies. My father, in his partiality, quite certain that these would gain, had the passionate rashness to go out to meet the expected visitors; not reflecting that the beaten side would in that case have to run over him. He went first into his garden, at the Friedberg Gate, where he found all quiet and solitary; then ventured forth to the Bornheim Heath, where soon, however, various scattered outrunners and baggage-men came in sight, who took the satisfaction, as they passed, of shooting at the boundary-stones, and sent our eager wanderer the reverberated lead singing about his ears. He reckoned it wiser, therefore, to come back; and learned on some inquiry, what the sound of the firing might already have taught him, that for the French all went well, and no retreat was thought of. Arriving home full of black humour, he quite, at sight of his wounded and prisoner countrymen, lost all composure. From him also many a gift went out for the passing wagons, but only Germans were to taste of it; which arrangement, as Fate had so huddled friends and foes together, could not always be adhered to.

'Our mother, and we children, who had from the first built upon the Count's word, and so passed a tolerably quiet day, were greatly rejoiced, and our mother doubly comforted, as she that morning, on questioning the oracle of her jewel-box by the scratch of a needle, had obtained a most consolatory answer not only for the present but for the future. We wished our father a similar belief and disposition; we flattered him what we could, we entreated him to take some food, which he had forborne all day; he refused our caresses and every enjoyment, and

retired to his room. Our joy, in the mean while, was not disturbed; the business was over: the King's Lieutenant, who to-day, contrary to custom, had been on horseback, at length returned; his presence at home was more needful than ever. We sprang out to meet him, kissed his hands, testified our joy. It seemed to please him greatly. "Well!" said he, with more softness than usual, "I am glad too for your sake, dear children." He ordered us sweetmeats, sweet wine, everything the best, and went to his chamber, where already a mass of importuners, solicitors, petitioners, were crowded.

'We held now a dainty collation; deplored our good father, who could not participate therein, and pressed our mother to bring him down; she, however, knew better, and how uncheering such gifts would be to him. Meanwhile she had put some supper in order, and would fain have sent him up a little to his room; but such irregularity was a thing he never suffered, not in extremest cases; so the sweet gifts being once put aside, she set about entreating him to come down in his usual way. He yielded at last, unwillingly, and little did we know what mischief we were making ready. The stairs ran free through the whole house, past the door of every ante-chamber. Our father, in descending, had to pass the Count's apartments. His ante-chamber was so full of people that he had at length resolved to come out, and despatch several at once; and this happened, alas, just at the instant our father was passing down. The Count stept cheerfully out, saluted him and said: "You will congratulate us and yourself that this dangerous affair has gone off so happily."—"Not at all!" replied my father, with grim emphasis: "I wish they had chased you to the Devil, had I myself gone too." The Count held-in for a moment, then burst forth with fury: "You shall repent this! You shall not"——'

—Father Goethe, however, has 'in the mean while quietly descended,' and sat down to sup much cheerfuller than formerly; he little caring, 'we little knowing, in what questionable way he had rolled the stone from his heart,' and how official friends must interfere, and secret nogotiations enough go on, to keep him out of military prison, and worse things that might have befallen there. On all which may we be permitted once again to make the simple reflection: What a plagued and plaguing world, with its battles and bombardments, wars and rumours of war (which sow or reap no ear of corn for any man), this is! The boy, who here watches the musket-volleys and cannon-thunders of the great Fritz, shall, as man, witness the siege of Mentz; fly with Brunswick Dukes before Dumouriez and his Sansculottes, through a country champed into one red world of mud, 'like Pharaoh' (for the carriage too

aks down) 'through the Red Sea;' and finally become involved the universal fire-consummation of Napoleon, and by skill defend nself from hurt therein!

The father, with occasional subsidiary private tutors, is his son's ioolmaster; a somewhat pedantic pedagogue, with ambition ough and faithful goodwill, but more of rigour than of insight; o, however, works on a subject that he *cannot* spoil. Languages, the number of six or seven, with whatsoever pertains to them; tories, syllabuses, knowledges-made-easy; not to speak of danc-, drawing, music, or, in due time, riding and fencing: all is en-in with boundless appetite and aptitude; all is but fuel, in-iciously piled and of wet quality, yet under which works an quenchable Greek-fire that will feed itself therewith, that will day make it *all* clear and glowing. The paternal grandmother, ollected as a 'pale, thin, ever white and clean-dressed figure,' vides the children many a satisfaction; and at length, on some ive night, the crowning one of a puppet-show: whereupon ues a long course of theatrical speculatings and practisings, newhat as delineated, for another party, in the first book of *ister's Apprenticeship;* in which Work, indeed, especially in the lier portion of it, some shadow of the author's personal experi-e and culture is more than once traceable. Thus Meister's perate burnt-offering of his young 'Poems on various Occasions,' s the image of a reality which took place in Leipzig; performed perately enough, 'on the kitchen hearth, the thick smoke from hich, flowing through the whole house, filled our good landlady ith alarm.'

Old Imperial-Freetown Frankfort is not without its notabilities. gic or comic; in any case, impressive and didactic. The young art is filled with boding to look into the *Judcn-gasse* (Jew-gate), ere squalid painful Hebrews are banished to scour old clothes, d in hate, and greed, and Old-Hebrew obstinacy and implaca-ity, work out a wonderful prophetic existence, as 'a people rible from the beginning;' manages, however, to get admittance their synagogue, and see a wedding and a circumcision. On its ike, aloft on one of the steeples, grins, for the last two-hundred ars, the bleached skull of a malefactor and traitor; properly, leed, not so much a traitor, as a Radical whose Reform Bill uld not be carried through. The future book-writer also, on one casion, sees the execution of a book; how the huge printed ams rustle in the flames, are stirred-up with oven-forks, and fly

half-charred aloft, the sport of winds; from which half-charred leaves, diligently picked up, he pieces himself a copy together, as did many others, and with double earnestness reads it.

As little is the old Freetown deficient in notable men; all accessible to a grandson of the Schultheiss,[4] who besides is a youth like no other. Of which originals, curious enough, and long since 'vanished from the sale-catalogues,' take only these two specimens:

'Von Reineck, of an old-noble house; able, downright, but stiff-necked; a lean black-brown man, whom I never saw smile. The misfortune befel him that his only daughter was carried-off by a friend of the family. He prosecuted his son-in-law with the most vehement suit; and as the courts, in their formality, would neither fast enough nor with force enough obey his vengeance, he fell-out with them; and there arose quarrel on quarrel, process on process. He withdrew himself wholly into his house and the adjoining garden, lived in a spacious but melancholy under-room, where for many years no brush of a painter, perhaps scarcely the besom of a maid, had got admittance. Me he would willingly endure; had specially recommended me to his younger son. His oldest friends, who knew how to humour him, his men of business and agents he often had at table: and, on such occasions, he failed not to invite me. His board was well furnished, his buffet still better. His guests, however, had one torment, a large stove smoking out of many cracks. One of the most intimate ventured once to take notice of it, and ask the host whether he could stand such an inconvenience the whole winter. He answered, like a second Timon, and Heautontimorumenos: "Would to God this were the worst mischief of those that plague me!" Not till late would he be persuaded to admit daughter and grandson to his sight: the son-in-law was never more to show face before him.

'On this brave and unfortunate man my presence had a kind effect; for as he gladly spoke with me, in particular instructed me on political and state concerns, he seemed himself to feel assuaged and cheered. Accordingly, the few old friends who still kept about him, would often make use of me when they wished to soothe his indignant humour, and persuade him to any recreation. In fact he now more than once went out with us, and viewed the neighbourhood again, on which, for so many years, he had not turned an eye.' * * *

'Hofrath Huisgen, not a native of Frankfort; of the Reformed religion,

[4] *Schultheiss* is the title of the chief magistrate in some free-towns and republics, for instance, in Berne too. It seems to derive itself from *Schuldheissen*, and may mean the Teller of Duty, him by whom what *should* be is *hight*.

and thus incapable of public office, of advocacy among the rest, which latter, however, as a man much trusted for juristic talent, he, under another's signature, contrived quite calmly to practise, as well in Frankfort as in the Imperial Courts,—might be about sixty when I happened to have writing-lessons along with his son, and so came into the house. His figure was large; tall without being bony, broad without corpulency. His face, deformed not only by small-pox, but wanting one of the eyes, you could not look on, for the first time, without apprehension. On his bald head he wore always a perfectly white bell-shaped cap (*Glockenmütze*) tied at top with a ribbon. His night-gowns, of calamanco or damask, were always as if new-washed. He inhabited a most cheerful suite of rooms on the ground floor in the *Allee*, and the neatness of everything about him corresponded to it. The high order of his books, papers, maps made a pleasant impression. His son, Heinrich Sebastian, who afterwards became known by various writings on Art, promised little in his youth. Good-natured but heavy, not rude yet artless, and without wish to instruct himself, he sought rather to avoid his father, as from his mother he could get whatever he wanted. I, on the other hand, came more and more into intimacy with the master the more I knew of him. As he meddled with none but important law-cases, he had time enough to amuse and occupy himself with other things. I had not long been about him, and listened to his doctrine, till I came to observe that in respect of God and the World he stood on the opposition side. One of his pet books was *Agrippa de Vanitate Scientiarum;* this he particularly recommended me to read, and did therewith set my young brain, for a while, into considerable tumult. I, in the joy of my youth, was inclined to a sort of optimism, and with God or the Gods had now tolerably adjusted myself again; for, by a series of years, I had got to experience that there is many a balance against evil, that misfortunes are things one recovers from, that in dangers one finds deliverance, and does not always break his neck. On what men did and tried, moreover, I looked with tolerance, and found much praiseworthy which my old gentleman would nowise be content with. Nay, once, as he had been depicting me the world not a little on the crabbed side, I noticed in him that he meant still to finish with a trump-card. He shut, as in such cases his wont was, the blind left eye close; looked with the other broad out; and said, in a snuffling voice: "*Auch in Gott entdeck' ich Fehler.*"'

Of a gentler character is the reminiscence of the maternal grandfather, old Schultheiss Textor; with his gift of prophetic dreaming, 'which endowment none of his descendants inherited;' with his kind, mild ways; there as he glides about in his garden, at evening, 'in black-velvet cap,' trimming 'the finer sort of

fruit-trees,' with aid of those antique embroidered gloves or gauntlets, yearly handed him at the *Pfeiffergericht:* a soft, spirit-looking figure; the farthest outpost of the Past, which behind him melts into dim vapour. In Frau von Klettenberg, a religious associate of the mother's, we become acquainted with the *Schöne Seele* (Fair Saint) of *Meister;* she, at an after period, studied to convert her *Philo,* but only very partially succeeded. Let us notice also, as a token for good, how the young universal spirit takes pleasure in the workshops of handicraftsmen, and loves to understand their methods of labouring and of living:

'My father had early accustomed me to manage little matters for him. In particular, it was often my commission to stir-up the craftsmen he employed; who were too apt to loiter with him; as he wanted to have all accurately done, and finally for prompt payment to have the price moderated. I came, in this way, into almost all manner of workshops; and as it lay in my nature to shape myself into the circumstances of others, to feel every species of human existence, and with satisfaction participate therein, I spent many pleasant hours in such places; grew to understand the procedure of each, and what of joy and of sorrow, advantage or drawback, the indispensable conditions of this or that way of life brought with them. * * * The household economy of the various crafts, which took its figure and colour from the occupation of each, was also silently an object of attention; and so unfolded, so confirmed itself in me the feeling of the equality, if not of all men, yet of all men's situations; existence by itself appearing as the head condition, all the rest as indifferent and accidental.'

And so, amid manifold instructive influences, has the boy grown out of boyhood; when now a new figure enters on the scene, bringing far higher revelations:

'As at last the wine was failing, one of them called the maid; but instead of her there came a maiden of uncommon, and to see her in this environment, of incredible beauty. "What is it?" said she, after kindly giving us good-evening: "the maid is ill and gone to bed: can I serve you?"—"Our wine is done," said one; "couldst thou get us a couple of bottles over the way, it were very good of thee."—"Do it, Gretchen," said another, "it is but a cat's-leap."—"Surely!" said she; took a couple of empty bottles from the table, and hastened out. Her figure, when she turned away from you, was almost prettier than before. The little cap sat so neat on the little head, which a slim neck so gracefully united with back and shoulders. Everything about her seemed select;

and you could follow the whole form more calmly, as attention was not now attracted and arrested by the true still eyes and lovely mouth alone.'

It is at the very threshold of youth that this episode of Gretchen (Margarete, Mar-*g'ret'-kin*) occurs; the young critic of slim necks and true still eyes shall now know something of natural magic, and the importance of one mortal to another; the wild-flowing bottomless sea of human Passion, glorious in auroral light (which, alas, may become infernal lightning), unveils itself a little to him. A graceful little episode we reckon it; and Gretchen better than most first-loves: wholly an innocent, wise, dainty maiden; pure and poor,—who vanishes from us here; but, we trust, in some quiet nook of the Rhineland, became wife and mother, and was the joy and sorrow of some brave man's heart, according as it is appointed. To the boy himself it ended painfully, almost fatally, had not sickness come to his deliverance; and here too he may experience how 'a shadow chases us in all manner of sunshine,' and in this *What-d'ye-call-it* of Existence the tragic element is not wanting. The name of Gretchen, not her story, which had nothing in it of that guilt and terror, has been made world-famous in the Play of *Faust*.—

Leipzig University has the honour of matriculating him. The name of his 'propitious mother' she may boast of, but not of the reality: alas, in these days, the University of the Universe is the only propitious mother of such; all other propitious mothers are but unpropitious superannuated dry-nurses fallen bedrid, from whom the famished nurseling has to *steal* even bread and water, if he will not die; whom for most part he soon takes leave of, giving perhaps (as in Gibbon's case), for farewell thanks, some rough tweak of the nose; and rushes desperate into the wide world an orphan. The time is advancing, slower or faster, when the bedrid dry-nurse will decease, and be succeeded by a walking and stirring wet one. Goethe's employments and culture at Leipzig lay in quite other groves than the academic: he listened to the Ciceronian Ernesti with eagerness, but the life-giving word flowed not from his mouth; to the sacerdotal, eclectic-sentimental Gellert (the divinity of all tea-table moral-philosophers of both sexes); witnessed 'the pure soul, the genuine will of the noble man,' heard 'his admonitions, warnings and entreaties, uttered in a somewhat 'hollow and melancholy tone;' and then the Frenchman say to it all, "*Laissez le faire; il nous forme des dupes.*" 'In logic it

'seemed to me very strange that I must now take-up those 'spiritual operations which from of old I had executed with the 'utmost convenience, and tatter them asunder, insulate and as if 'destroy them, that their right employment might become plain 'to me. Of the Thing, of the World, of God, I fancied I knew 'almost about as much as the Doctor himself; and he seemed to 'me, in more than one place, to hobble dreadfully (*gewaltig zu 'hapern*).'

However, he studies to some profit with the Painter Oeser; hears, one day, at the door, with horror, that there is no lesson, for news of Winkelmann's assassination have come. With the ancient Gottsched, too, he has an interview: alas, it is a young Zeus come to dethrone old Saturn, whose time in the literary heaven is nigh run; for on Olympus itself, one Demiurgus passeth away and another cometh. Gottsched had introduced the reign of *water*, in all shapes liquid and solid, and long gloriously presided over the same; but now there is enough of it, and the 'rayless majesty' (had he been prophetic) here beheld the rayed one, before whom he was to melt away:

'We announced ourselves. The servant led us into a large room, and said his master would come immediately. Whether we misinterpreted a motion he made I cannot say; at any rate, we fancied he had beckoned us to advance into an adjoining chamber. We did advance, and to a singular scene; for, at the same moment, Gottsched, the huge broad gigantic man, entered from the opposite door, in green damask nightgown, lined with red taffeta; but his enormous head was bald and without covering. This, however, was the very want to be now supplied: for the servant came springing-in at the side-door, with a full-bottomed wig on his hand (the locks fell down to his elbow), and held it out, with terrified gesture, to his master. Gottsched, without uttering the smallest complaint, lifted the head-gear with his left hand from the servant's arm; and very deftly swinging it up to its place on the head, at the same time, with his right hand, gave the poor man a box on the ear, which, as is seen in comedies, dashed him spinning out of the apartment; whereupon the respectable-looking Patriarch quite gravely desired us to be seated, and with proper dignity went through a tolerably long discourse.'

In which discourse, however, it is likely, little edification for the young inquirer could lie. Already by multifarious discoursings and readings he has convinced himself, to his despair, of the watery condition of the Gottschedic world, and how 'the *Noachide* '(Noaheid) of Bodmer is a true symbol of the deluge that has

'swelled-up round the German Parnassus,' and in literature as in philosophy there is neither landmark nor loadstar. Here, too, he resumes his inquiries about religion, falls into 'black scruples' about most things; and in 'the bald and feeble deliverances' propounded him has sorry comfort. Outward things, moreover, go not as they should: the copious philosophic harlequinades of that wag, Beyrish 'with a long nose,' unsettle rather than settle; as do, in many ways, other wise and foolish mortals of both sexes: matters grow worse and worse. He falls sick, becomes wretched enough; yet unfolds withal 'an audacious humour which feels itself superior to the 'moment, not only fears no danger, but even wilfully courts it.' And thus, somewhat in a wrecked state, he quits his propitious mother, and returns home.

Nevertheless let there be no reflections: he must now in earnest get forward with his Law, and on to Strasburg to complete himself therein; so has the paternal judgment arranged it. A Lawyer, the thing in these latter days called Lawyer, of a man in whom ever-bounteous Nature has sent us a Poet for the World! O blind mortals, blind over what lies closest to us, what we have the truest wish to see! In this young colt that caprioles there in young lustihood, and snuffs the wind with an 'audacious humour,' rather dangerous-looking, no Sleswic Dobbin, to rise to dromedary stature, and draw three tons avoirdupois (of street-mud or whatever else), has been vouchsafed; but a winged miraculous Pegasus to carry us to the heavens!—Whereon too (if we consider it) many a heroic Bellerophon shall, in times coming, mount, and destroy Chimæras, and deliver afflicted nations on the lower earth.

Meanwhile, be this as it may, the youth is gone to Strasburg to prepare for the *examen rigorosum;* though, as it turned out, for quite a different than the Law one. Confusion enough is in his head and heart; poetic objects too have taken root there, and will not rest till they have worked themselves into form. 'These,' says he, 'were Götz von Berlichingen and Faust. The written Life of 'the former had seized my inmost soul. The figure of a rude well-'meaning self-helper, in wild anarchic time, excited my deepest 'sympathy. The impressive puppet-show Fable of the other 'sounded and hummed through me many-toned enough.'—'Let us 'withdraw, however,' subjoins he, 'into the free air, to the high 'broad platform of the Minster; as if the time were still here, 'when we young ones often rendezvoused thither to salute, with 'full rummers, the sinking sun.' They had good telescopes with

them; 'and one friend after another searched out the spot in the 'distance which had become the dearest to him; neither was I 'without a little eye-mark of the like, which, though it rose not 'conspicuous in the landscape, drew me to it beyond all else with a 'kindly magic.' This alludes, we perceive, to that Alsatian Vicar of Wakefield, and his daughter the fair Frederike; concerning which matter a word may not be useless here. Exception has been taken by certain tender souls, of the all-for-love sort, against Goethe's conduct in that business. He flirted with his blooming blue-eyed Alsatian, she with him, innocently enough, thoughtlessly enough, till they both came to love each other; and then, when the marrying point began to grow visible in the distance, he stopt short and would no farther. Adieu, he cried, and waved his lily hand. 'The good Frederike was weeping; I too was sick enough at heart.' Whereupon arises the question: Is Goethe a bad man; or is he not a bad man? Alas, worthy souls! if this world were all a wedding-dance, and *Thou-shalt* never came into collision with *Thou-wilt*, what a new improved time had we of it! But it is man's miserable lot, in the mean while, to eat and labour as well as wed; alas, how often, like Corporal Trim, does he spend the whole night, one moment dividing the world into two halves with his fair Beguine, next moment remembering that he has only a knapsack and fifteen florins to divide with any one! Besides, you do not consider that our dear Frederike, whom we too could weep for if it served, had a sound German heart within her stays; had furthermore abundance of *work* to do, and not even leisure to die of love; above all, that at this period, in the country parts of Alsatia, there were no circulating-library novels.

With regard to the false one's cruelty of temper, who, if we remember, saw a ghost in broad noon that day he rode away from her, let us, on the other hand, hear Jung Stilling, for he also had experience thereof at this very date. Poor Jung, a sort of German Dominie Sampson, awkward, honest, irascible, 'in old-fashioned clothes and bag-wig,' who had been several things, charcoal-burner, and, in repeated alternation, tailor and schoolmaster, was now come to Strasburg to study medicine; with purse long-necked, yet with head that had brains in it, and heart full of trust in God. A pious soul, who if he did afterwards write books on the Nature of Departed Spirits, also restored to sight (by his skill in eye-operations) above *two thousand poor blind persons*, without fee or reward, even supporting many of them in the hospital at his own expense.

'There dined,' says he, 'at this table about twenty people, whom the two comrades' (Troost and I) 'saw one after the other enter. One especially, with large bright eyes, magnificent brow, and fine stature, walked gallantly (*muthig*) in. He drew Herr Troost's and Stilling's eyes on him; Herr Troost said, "That must be a superior man." Stilling assented, yet thought they would both have much vexation from him, as he looked like one of your wild fellows. This did Stilling infer from the frank style which the student had assumed; but here he was far mistaken. They found, meanwhile, that this distinguished individual was named Herr Goethe.

'Herr Troost whispered to Stilling, "Here it were best one sat seven days silent." Stilling felt this truth; they sat silent therefore, and no one particularly minded them, except that Goethe now and then hurled over (*herüberwälzte*) a look: he sat opposite Stilling, and had the government of the table without aiming at it.

'Herr Troost was neat, and dressed in the fashion; Stilling likewise tolerably so. He had a dark-brown coat with fustian under-garments: only that a scratch-wig also remained to him, which, among his bag-wigs, he would wear out. This he had put on one day, and came therewith to dinner. Nobody took notice of it except Herr Waldberg of Vienna. That gentleman looked at him; and as he had already heard that Stilling was greatly taken up about religion, he began, and asked him, Whether he thought Adam in Paradise had worn a scratch-wig? All laughed heartily, except Salzman, Goethe and Troost; these did not laugh. In Stilling wrath rose and burnt, and he answered: "Be ashamed of this jest; such a trivial thing is not worth laughing at!" But Goethe struck-in and added: "Try a man first whether he deserves mockery. It is devil-like to fall upon an honest-hearted person who has injured nobody, and make sport of him!" From that time Herr Goethe took up Stilling, visited him, liked him, made friendship and brothership with him, and strove by all opportunities to do him kindness. Pity that so few are acquainted with this noble man in respect of his heart!'[5]

Here, indeed, may be the place to mention, that this noble man, in respect of his heart, and goodness and badness, is not altogether easy to get acquainted with; that innumerable persons, of the man-milliner, parish-clerk and circulating-library sort, will find him a hard nut to crack. Hear in what questionable manner, so early as the year 1773, he expresses himself towards Herr Sulzer, whose beautiful hypothesis, that 'Nature meant, by the constant influx of 'satisfactions streaming-in upon us, to fashion our minds, on the 'whole, to softness and sensibility,' he will not leave a leg to stand

[5] *Stillings Wanderschaft.* Berlin and Leipzig, 1778.

on. '*On the whole*,' says he, 'she does no such thing; she rather, 'God be thanked, hardens her genuine children against the pains 'and evils she incessantly prepares for them; so that we name him 'the happiest man who is the strongest to make front against evil, 'to put it aside from him, and in defiance of it go the road of his 'own will.' 'Man's art in all situations is to fortify himself against 'Nature, to avoid her thousandfold ills, and only to enjoy his 'measure of the good; till at length he manages to include the 'whole circulation of his true and factitious wants in a palace, and 'fix as far as possible all scattered beauty and felicity within his 'glass walls, where accordingly he grows ever the weaker, takes to '"joys of the soul," and his powers, roused to their natural exertion 'by no contradiction, melt away into'—*horresco referens*—'Virtue, 'Benevolence, Sensibility!' In Goethe's Writings too, we all know, the moral lesson is seldom so easily educed as one would wish. Alas, how seldom is he so direct in tendency as his own plain-spoken moralist at Plundersweilern:

'Dear Christian people, one and all,
When will you cease your sinning?
Else can your comfort be but small,
Good hap scarce have beginning:
For Vice is hurtful unto man,
In Virtue lies his surest plan;'

or, to give it in the original words, the emphasis of which no foreign idiom can imitate:

'*Die Tugend ist das hochste Gut,*
Das Laster Weh dem Menschen thut!'

In which emphatic couplet, does there not, as the critics say in other cases, lie the essence of whole volumes, such as we have read?—

Goethe's far most important relation in Strasburg was the accidental temporary one with Herder; which issued, indeed, in a more permanent, though at no time an altogether intimate one. Herder, with much to give, had always something to require; living with him seems never to have been wholly a sinecure. Goethe and he moreover were fundamentally different, not to say discordant; neither could the humour of the latter be peculiarly sweetened by his actual business in Strasburg, that of undergoing a surgical operation on 'the lachrymatory duct,' and, above all, an unsuccessful one:

'He was attending the Prince of Holstein-Eutin, who laboured under ıental distresses, on a course of travel; and had arrived with him at ;trasburg. Our society, so soon as his presence there was known, felt a trong wish to get near him; which happiness, quite unexpectedly and ıy chance, befel me first. I had gone to the Inn *zum Geist*, visiting I orget what stranger of rank. Just at the bottom of the stairs I came ıpon a man, like myself about to ascend, whom by his look I could take o be a clergyman. His powdered hair was fastened-up into a round lock, he black coat also distinguished him; still more a long black silk mantle, he end of which he had gathered together and stuck into his pocket. This in some measure surprising, yet on the whole gallant and pleasing igure, of whom I had already heard speak, left me no doubt but it was he famed Traveller; and my address soon convinced him that he was nown to me. He asked my name, which could not be of any signifi- ance to him; however, my openness seemed to give pleasure, for he eplied to it in friendly style, and as we stept upstairs, forthwith showed himself ready for a lively communication. Our visit also was to the same party; and before separating I begged permission to wait upon himself, which he kindly enough accorded me. I delayed not to make repeated use of this preferment; and was the longer the more attracted towards him. He had something softish in his manner, which was fit and digni- fied, without strictly being bred. A round face; a fine brow; a somewhat short blunt nose; a somewhat projected, yet highly characteristic, pleasant, amiable mouth. Under black eyebrows, a pair of coal-black eyes, which failed not of their effect, though one of them was wont to be red and inflamed.'

With this gifted man, by five years his senior, whose writings had already given him a name, and announced the much that lay in him, the open-hearted disciple could manifoldly communicate, learning and enduring. Erelong, under that 'softish manner,' there disclosed itself a 'counterpulse' of causticity, of ungentle almost noisy banter; the blunt nose was too often curled in an aduncо-suspensive manner. Whatsoever of self-complacency, of acquired attachment and insight, of self-sufficiency well or ill grounded, lay in the youth, was exposed, we can fancy, to the severest trial. In Herder too, as in an expressive microcosm, he might see imaged the whole wild world of German literature, of European Thought; its old workings and misworkings, its best recent tendencies and efforts; what its past and actual wasteness, perplexity, confusion worse confounded, was. In all which, moreover, the bantered, yet imperturbably inquiring brave young man had quite other than a theoretic interest, being himself minded to dwell there. It is easy

to conceive that Herder's presence, stirring-up in that fashion so many new and old matters, would mightily aggravate the former 'fermentation;' and thereby, it is true, unintentionally or not, forward the same towards clearness.

In fact, with the hastiest glance over the then position of the world spiritual, we shall find that as Disorder is never wanting (and for the young spiritual hero, who is there only to destroy Disorder and make it Order, can least of all be wanting), so, at the present juncture, it specially abounded. Why dwell on this often-delineated Epoch? Over all Europe the reign of Earnestness had now wholly dwindled into that of Dilettantism. The voice of a certain modern 'closet-logic,' which called itself, and could not but call itself, Philosophy, had gone forth, saying, Let there be darkness, and there was darkness. No Divinity any longer dwelt in the world; and as men cannot do without a Divinity, a sort of terrestrial-upholstery one had been got together, and named TASTE, with medallic virtuosi and picture cognoscenti, and enlightened letter and belles-lettres men enough for priests. To which worship, with its stunted formularies and hungry results, must the earnest mind, like the hollow and shallow one, adjust itself, as best might be. To a new man, no doubt, the Earth is always new, never wholly without interest. Knowledge, were it only that of dead languages, or of dead actions, the foreign tradition of what others had acquired and done, was still to be searched after; fame might be enjoyed if procurable; above all, the culinary and brewing arts remained in pristine completeness, their results could be relished with pristine vigour. Life lumbered along, better or worse, in pitiful discontent, not yet in decisive desperation, as through a dim day of languor, sultry and sunless. Already, too, on the horizon might be seen clouds, might be heard murmurs, which by and by proved themselves of an electric character, and were to cool and clear that same sultriness in wondrous deluges.

To a man standing in the midst of German literature, and looking out thither for his highest good, the view was troubled perhaps with various peculiar perplexities. For two centuries, German literature had lain in the sere leaf. The Luther, 'whose words were half battles,' and such half battles as could shake and overset half Europe with their cannonading, had long since gone to sleep; and all other words were but the miserable bickering of theological camp-suttlers in quarrel over the stripping of the slain. Ulrich Hutten slept silent, in the little island of the Zurich Lake; the weary and heavy-laden had wiped the sweat from his brow, and

id him down to rest there: the valiant, fire-tempered heart, with ll its woes and loves and loving indignations, mouldered, cold, rgotten; with such a pulse no new heart rose to beat. The mer Opitzes and Flemmings of a succeeding era had, in like nner, long fallen obsolete. One unhappy generation after another f pedants, 'rhizophagous,' living on roots, Greek or Hebrew; of rce-writers, gallant-verse writers, journalists and other jugglers of ondescript sort, wandered in nomadic wise, whither provender was o be had; among whom, if a passionate Gunther go with some mphasis to ruin; if an illuminated Thomasius, earlier than the eneral herd, deny witchcraft, we are to esteem it a felicity. This oo, however, has passed; and now, in manifold enigmatical signs, new Time announces itself. Well-born Hagedorns, munificent leims have again rendered the character of Author honourable; he polish of correct, assiduous Rabeners and Ramlers have moothed away the old impurities; a pious Klopstock, to the eneral enthusiasm, rises anew into something of seraphic music, hough by methods wherein he can have no follower; the brave pirit of a Lessing pierces, in many a life-giving ray, through the lark inertness: Germany has risen to a level with Europe, is henceforth participant of all European influences; nay it is now ppointed, though not yet ascertained, that Germany is to be the leader of spiritual Europe. A deep movement agitates the universal mind of Germany, though as yet no one sees towards what issue; only that heavings and eddyings, confused conflicting tendencies, work unquietly everywhere; the movement is begun and will not stop, but the course of it is yet far from ascertained. Even to the young man now looking-on with such anxious intensity had this very task been allotted: To find it a course, and set it flowing thereon.

Whoever will represent this confused revolutionary condition of all things, has but to fancy how it would act on the most susceptive and comprehensive of living minds; what a Chaos he had taken in, and was dimly struggling to body-forth into a Creation. Add to which, his so confused, contradictory personal condition; appointed by a positive father to be practitioner of Law, by a still more positive mother (old Nature herself) to be practitioner of Wisdom, and Captain of spiritual Europe: we have confusion enough for him, doubts economic and doubts theologic, doubts moral and æsthetical, a whole world of confusion and doubt.

Nevertheless to the young Strasburg student the gods had given their most precious gift, which is worth all others, without which

all others are worth nothing; a seeing eye and a faithful loving heart:

'Er hatt' ein Auge treu und klug,
Und war auch liebevoll genug,
Zu schauen manches klar und rein,
Und wieder alles zu machen sein;
Hatt' auch eine Zunge die sich ergoss,
Und leicht und fein in Worte floss;
Dess thaten die Musen sich erfreun,
Wollten ihn zum Meistersänger weihn.'[6]

A mind of all-piercing vision, of sunny strength, not made to ray-out darker darkness, but to bring warm sunlight, all-purifying, all-uniting. A clear, invincible mind, and 'consecrated to be Master-singer' in quite another guild than that Nürnberg one.

His first literary productions fall in his twenty-third year; *Werter*, the most celebrated of these, in his twenty-fifth. Of which wonderful Book, and its now recognised character as poetic (and prophetic) utterance of the World's Despair, it is needless to repeat what has elsewhere been written. This and *Götz von Berlichingen*, which also, as a poetic looking-back into the past, was a word for the world, have produced incalculable effects;—which now indeed, however some departing echo of them may linger in the wrecks of our own Mosstrooper and Satanic Schools, do at length all happily lie behind us. Some trifling incidents at Wetzlar, and the suicide of an unhappy acquaintance, were the means of 'crystallising' that wondrous perilous stuff, which the young heart oppressively held dissolved in it, into this world-famous, and as it proved world-medicative *Werter*. He had gone to Wetzlar with an eye still to Law; which now, however, was abandoned, never to be resumed. Thus did he too, 'like Saul the son of Kish, go out to seek his 'father's asses, and instead thereof find a kingdom.'

With the completion of these two Works (a completion in every sense, for they were not only emitted, but speedily also *de*mitted, and seen over, and left behind), commences what we can specially call his Life, his activity as Man. The outward particulars of it, from this point where his own Narrative ends, have been briefly summed-up in these terms:

[6] *Hans Sachsens Poetische Sendung* (*Goethes Werke*, xiii.); a beautiful piece (a very *Hans Sachs beatified*, both in character and style), which we wish there was any possibility of translating.

In 1776, the Heir-apparent of Weimar was pas·ing through Frank-
t, on which occasion, by the intervention of some friends, he waited
on Goethe. The visit must have been mutually agreeable; for a short
ıe afterwards the young Author was invited to court; apparently to
ıtribute his assistance in various literary institutions and arrangements
ɔn proceeding or contemplated; and in pursuance of this honourable
l, he accordingly settled at Weimar, with the title of *Legationsrath*,
d the actual dignity of a place in the *Collegium*, or Council. The
ınexion begun under such favourable auspices, and ever afterwards
ıtinued under the like or better, has been productive of important
ısequences, not only to Weimar but to all Germany. The noble
rpose undertaken by the Duchess Amelia was zealously forwarded by
ɛ young Duke on his accession; under whose influence, supported
d directed by his new Councillor, this inconsiderable state has gained
: itself a fairer distinction than any of its larger, richer or more war-
:e neighbours. By degrees whatever was brightest in the genius of
ırmany had been gathered to this little court; a classical theatre was
der the superintendence of Goethe and Schiller; here Wieland taught
d sung; in the pulpit was Herder; and possessing such a four, the small
wn of Weimar, some five-and-twenty years ago, might challenge the
oudest capital of the world to match it in intellectual wealth. Occu-
ɛd so profitably to his country, and honourably to himself, Goethe con-
ıued rising in favour with his Prince; by degrees a political was added
his literary trust; in 1779 he became Privy Councillor; President in
32; and at length after his return from Italy, where he had spent two
ars in varied studies and observation, he was appointed Minister; a
st which he only a few years ago resigned, on his final retirement from
.blic affairs.'

Notable enough that little Weimar should, in this particular,
ıve brought back, as it were, an old Italian Commonwealth into
e nineteenth century! For the Petrarcas and Boccaccios, though
verenced as Poets, were not supposed to have lost their wits as
en; but could be employed in the highest services of the state,
ıt only as fit, but as the fittest, to discharge these. Very different
.th us, where Diplomatists and Governors can be picked up from
e highways, or chosen in the manner of blindman's buff (the
st figure you clutch, say rather that clutches *you*, will make a
vernor); and, even in extraordinary times, it is thought much if
Milton can become Latin Clerk under some Bulstrode Whitelock,
d be called 'one Mr. Milton.' As if the poet, with his poetry,
ɛre no other than a pleasant mountebank, with faculty of a certain
ound-and-lofty tumbling which would amuse; for which you

must throw him a few coins, a little flattery, otherwise he would not amuse you with it. As if there were any talent whatsoever; above all, as if there were any talent of Poetry (by the consent of all ages the highest talent, and sometimes pricelessly high), the first foundation of which were not even these two things (properly but one thing): intellectual Perspicacity, with force and honesty of Will. Which two, do they not, in their simplest quite naked form, constitute the very equipment a Man of Business needs; the very implements whereby *all* business, from that of the delver and ditcher to that of the legislator and imperator, is accomplished; as in their noblest concentration they are still the moving faculty of the Artist and Prophet!

To Goethe himself this connexion with Weimar opened the happiest course of life which, probably, the age he lived in could have yielded him. Moderation, yet abundance; elegance without luxury or sumptuosity: Art enough to give a heavenly firmament to his existence; Business enough to give it a solid earth. In his multifarious duties he comes in contact with all manner of men; gains experience and tolerance of all men's ways. A faculty like his, which could master the highest spiritual problems and conquer Evil Spirits in their own domain, was not likely to be foiled by such when they put-on the simpler shape of material clay. The greatest of Poets is also the skilfulest of Managers: the little terrestrial Weimar trust committed to him prospers; and one sees with a sort of smile, in which may lie a deep seriousness, how the Jena Museums, University arrangements, Weimar Art-exhibitions and Palace-buildings, are guided smoothly on, by a hand which could have worthily swayed imperial sceptres. The world, could it intrust its imperial sceptres to such hands, were blessed: nay to this man, without the world's consent given or asked, a still higher function *had* been committed. But on the whole, we name his external life happy, among the happiest, in this, that a noble princely Courtesy could dwell in it, based on the worship, by speech and practice, of Truth only (for his victory, as we said above, was so complete, as almost to hide that there had been a struggle), and the worldly could praise him as the most agreeable of men, and the spiritual as the highest and clearest; but happy above all, in this, that it forwarded him, as no other could have done, in his inward life, the good or evil hap of which was alone of permanent importance.

The inward life of Goethe, onward from this epoch, lies nobly

:orded in the long series of his Writings. Of these, meanwhile, ə great bulk of our English world has nowise yet got to such derstanding and mastery, that we could with much hope of ɔfit, go into a critical examination of their merits and character- ics. Such a task can stand-over till the day for it arrive; be it this generation, or the next, or after the next. What has been ewhere already set forth suffices the present want, or needs only be repeated and enforced; the expositor of German things must ɾ, with judicious Zanga in the play: "First recover that, then alt thou know more." A glance over the grand outlines of the ıtter, and more especially under the aspect suitable to these ys, can alone be in place here.

In *Goethe's Works*, chronologically arranged, we see this above things: A mind working itself into clearer and clearer freedom; ining a more and more perfect dominion of its world. The stilential fever of Scepticism runs through its stages; but happily ends and disappears at the last stage, not in death, not in chronic alady (the commonest way), but in clearer, henceforth invulner- le health. *Werter* we called the voice of the world's despair: ssionate, uncontrollable is this voice; not yet melodious and preme,—as nevertheless we at length hear it in the wild apoca- ɔtic *Faust:* like a death-song of departing worlds; no voice of ɾful 'morning stars singing together' over a Creation; but of l nigh-extinguished midnight stars, in spheral swan-melody, oclaiming, It is ended!

What follows, in the next period, we might, for want of a fitter rm, call Pagan or Ethnic in character; meaning thereby an thropomorphic character, akin to that of old Greece and Rome. *ilhelm Meister* is of that stamp: warm, hearty, sunny human ıdeavour; a free recognition of Life, in its depth, variety and ıjesty; as yet no Divinity recognised there. The famed *Vene- ın Epigrams* are of the like Old Ethnic tone: musical, joyfully ong; true, yet not the whole truth, and sometimes in their ınt realism jarring on the sense. As in this, oftener cited rhaps, by a certain class of wise men, than the due proportion manded:

Why so bustleth the People and crieth?—Would find itself victual,
Children too would beget, feed on the best may be had!
Mark in thy notebooks, Traveller, this, and at home go do likewise:
Farther reacheth no man, make he what stretching he will.

Doubt, reduced into Denial, now lies prostrate under foot: the fire has done its work, an old world is in ashes; but the smoke and the flame are blown away, and a sun again shines clear over the ruin, to raise therefrom a new nobler verdure and flowerage. Till at length, in the third or final period, melodious Reverence becomes triumphant; a deep all-pervading Faith, with mild voice, grave as gay, speaks forth to us in a *Meisters Wanderjahre*, in a *West-Œstlicher Divan;* in many a little *Zahme Xenie*, and true-hearted little rhyme, 'which,' it has been said, 'for pregnancy and 'genial significance, except in the Hebrew Scriptures, you will 'nowhere match.' As here, striking-in almost at a venture:

Like as a Star,
That maketh not haste,
That taketh not rest,
Be each one fulfilling
His god-given Hest.[1]

[1] *Wie das Gestirn,*
Ohne Hast,
Aber ohne Rast,
Drehe sich jeder
Um die eigne Last.

So stands it in the original; hereby, however, hangs a tale:

'A fact,' says one of our fellow-labourers in this German vineyard, 'has but 'now come to our knowledge, which we take pleasure and pride in stating. 'Fifteen Englishmen, entertaining that high consideration for the good Goethe, 'which the labours and high deserts of a long life usefully employed so richly 'merit from all mankind, have presented him with a highly-wrought Seal, as a 'token of their veneration.' We must pass over the description of the gift, for it would be too elaborate; suffice it to say, that amid tasteful carving and emblematic embossing enough, stood these words engraven on a gold belt, on the four sides respectively: *To the German Master: From Friends in England: 28th August:* 1831; finally, that the impression was a star encircled with a serpent-of-eternity, and this motto: *Ohne Hast Aber Ohne Rast.*

The following is the Letter which accompanied it:

'"*To the Poet Goethe, on the 28th of August* 1831.

'"Sir,—Among the friends whom this so interesting Anniversary calls round 'you, may we 'English friends,' in thought and symbolically, since personally 'it is impossible, present ourselves to offer you our affectionate congratulations. 'We hope you will do us the honour to accept this little Birthday Gift, which, 'as a true testimony of our feelings, may not be without value.

'"We said to ourselves: As it is always the highest duty and pleasure to 'show reverence to whom reverence is due, and our chief, perhaps our only 'benefactor is he who by act and word instructs us in wisdom,—so we, under-

Or this small Couplet, which the reader, if he will, may substitute for whole horse-loads of *Essays on the Origin of Evil;* a spiritual manufacture which, in these enlightened times, ought ere now to have gone out of fashion:

"What shall I teach thee, the foremost thing?"
Couldst teach me off my own Shadow to spring!

Or the pathetic picturesqueness of this:

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signed, feeling towards the Poet Goethe as the spiritually taught towards their spiritual teacher, are desirous to express that sentiment openly and in common; for which end we have determined to solicit his acceptance of a small English gift, proceeding from us all equally, on his approaching birthday; that so, while the venerable man still dwells among us, some memorial of the gratitude we owe him, and think the whole world owes him, may not be wanting.

'"And thus our little tribute, perhaps among the purest that men could offer to man, now stands in visible shape, and begs to be received. May it be welcome, and speak permanently of a most close relation, though wide seas flow between the parties!

'"We pray that many years may be added to a life so glorious, that all happiness may be yours, and strength given to complete your high task, even as it has hitherto proceeded, like a star, without haste, yet without rest.

'"We remain, Sir, your friends and servants,

'"FIFTEEN ENGLISHMEN."'

'The wonderful old man, to whom distant and unknown friends had paid such homage, could not but be moved at sentiments expressed in such terms. We hear that he values the token highly, and has condescended to return the following lines for answer:

"DEN FUNFZEHN ENGLISCHEN FREUNDEN.

Worte, die der Dichter spricht,
Treu, in heimischen Bezirken
Wirken gleich, doch weiss er nicht
Ob sie in die Ferne wirken.

Britten! habt sie aufgefasst:
'Thätigen Sinn, das Thun gezügelt;
Stetig Streben ohne Hast;'
Und so wollt Ihrs denn besiegelt!

"*Weimar, d. 28ten August* 1831. GOETHE."'

(*Fraser's Magazine*, xxii. 447.)

And thus, as it chanced, was the poet's *last* birthday celebrated by an outward ceremony of a peculiar kind; wherein too, it is to be hoped, might lie some inward meaning and sincerity.

A rampart-breach is every Day,
Which many mortals are storming:
Fall in the gap who may,
Of the slain no heap is forming.

Eine Bresche ist jeder Tag,
Die viele Menschen erstürmen;
Wer da auch fallen mag,
Die Todten sich niemals thürmen.

In such spirit, and with an eye that takes-in all provinces of human Thought, Feeling and Activity, does the Poet stand forth as the true prophet of his time; victorious over its contradiction, possessor of its wealth; embodying the nobleness of the past into a new whole, into a new vital nobleness for the present and the future. Antique nobleness in all kinds, yet worn with new clearness; the spirit of it is preserved and again revealed in shape, when the former shape and vesture had become old (as vestures do), and was dead and cast forth; and we mourned as if the spirit too were gone. This, we are aware, is a high saying; applicable to no other man living, or that has lived for some two centuries; ranks Goethe, not only as the highest man of his time, but as a man of universal Time, important for all generations,—one of the landmarks in the History of Men.

Thus, from our point of view, does Goethe rise on us as the Uniter, and victorious Reconciler, of the distracted, clashing elements of the most distracted and divided age that the world has witnessed since the Introduction of the Christian Religion, to which old chaotic Era, of world-confusion and world-*re*fusion, of blackest darkness, succeeded by a dawn of light and nobler 'dayspring from on high,' this wondrous Era of ours is, indeed, oftenest likened. To the faithful heart let no era be a desperate one! It is ever the nature of Darkness to be followed by a new nobler Light; nay to produce such. The woes and contradictions of an Atheistic time; of a world sunk in wickedness and baseness and unbelief, wherein also physical wretchedness, the disorganisation and broken-heartedness of whole classes struggling in ignorance and pain will not fail: all this, the view of all this, falls like a Sphinx-question on every new-born earnest heart, a life-and-death entanglement for every earnest heart to deliver itself from, and the world from. Of Wisdom cometh Strength: only when there is 'no vision' do the people perish. But, by natural vicissitude, the age of *Persiflage*

es out, and that of earnest unconquerable Endeavour must come : for the ashes of the old fire will not warm men anew; the w generation is too desolate to indulge in mockery,—unless, rhaps, in bitter suicidal mockery of itself! Thus after Voltaires ough have laughed and sniffed at what is false, appear some urgots to ask what is true. Woe to the land where, in these asons, no prophet arises; but only censors, satirists and em- ttered desperadoes, to make the evil worse; at best but to celerate a consummation, which in accelerating they have ag- avated! Old Europe had its Tacitus and Juvenal; but these ailed not. New Europe too has had its Mirabeaus, and Byrons, id Napoleons, and innumerable red-flaming meteors, shaking stilence from their hair; and earthquakes and deluges, and haos come again; but the clear Star, day's harbinger (*Phosphoros*, e bringer of *light*), had not yet been recognised.

That in Goethe there lay Force to educe reconcilement out of ch contradiction as man is now born into, marks him as the trong One of his time; the true *Earl*, though now with quite her weapons than those old steel *Jarls* were used to! Such concilement of contradictions, indeed, is the task of every man: e weakest reconciles somewhat; reduces old chaotic elements to new higher order; ever, according to faculty and endeavour, rings good out of evil. Consider now what faculty and endeavour ust belong to the highest of such tasks, which virtually includes l others whatsoever! The thing that was given this man to concile (to begin reconciling and teach us how to reconcile), was e inward spiritual chaos; the centre of all other confusions, tward and inward: he was to close the Abyss out of which such anifold destruction, moral, intellectual, social, was proceeding.

The greatness of his Endowment, manifested in such a work, as long been plain to all men. That it belongs to the highest ass of human endowments, entitling the wearer thereof, who so obly used it, to the appellation, in its strictest sense, of Great an,—is also becoming plain. A giant strength of Character is be traced here; mild and kindly and calm, even as strength er is. In the midst of so much spasmodic Byronism, bellowing ll its windpipe is cracked, how very different looks *this* symptom f strength: 'He appeared to aim at pushing away from him verything that did not hang upon his individual will.' 'In his wn imperturbable firmness of character, he had grown into the

'habit of never contradicting any one. On the contrary, he 'listened with a friendly air to every one's opinion, and would 'himself elucidate and strengthen it by instances and reasons of 'his own. All who did not know him fancied that he thought as 'they did; for he was possessed of a preponderating intellect, and 'could transport himself into the mental state of any man, and 'imitate his manner of conceiving.'[8] Beloved brethren, who wish to be strong! Had not the man, who could take this smooth method of it, more strength in him than any teeth-grinding, glass-eyed 'lone Caloyer' you have yet fallen-in with? Consider your ways; consider, first, whether you cannot do with being *weak!* If the answer still prove negative, consider, secondly, what strength actually is, and where you are to try for it. A certain strong man, of former time, fought stoutly at Lepanto; worked stoutly as Algerine slave; stoutly delivered himself from such working; with stout cheerfulness endured famine and nakedness and the world's ingratitude; and, sitting in jail, with the one arm left him, wrote our joyfulest, and all but our deepest, modern book, and named it *Don Quixote:* this was a genuine strong man. A strong man, of recent time, fights little for any good cause anywhere; works weakly as an English lord; weakly delivers himself from such working; with weak despondency endures the cackling of plucked geese at St. James's; and, sitting in sunny Italy, in his coach-and-four, at a distance of two thousand miles from them, writes, over many reams of paper, the following sentence, with variations: *Saw ever the world one greater or unhappier?* This was a sham strong man. Choose ye.—

Of Goethe's spiritual Endowment, looked at on the Intellectual side, we have (as indeed lies in the nature of things, for moral and intellectual are fundamentally one and the same) to pronounce a similar opinion; that it is great among the very greatest. As the first gift of all, may be discerned here utmost Clearness, all-piercing faculty of Vision; whereto, as we ever find it, all other gifts are superadded; nay, properly they are but other forms of the same gift. A nobler power of insight than this of Goethe you in vain look for, since Shakspeare passed away. In fact, there is much every way, here in particular, that these two minds have in common. Shakspeare too does not look *at* a thing, but into it, through it; so that he constructively comprehends it, can take it asunder, and put it together again; the thing melts, as it were,

[8] *Wilhelm Meister*, book vi.

into light under his eye, and anew *creates* itself before him. That is to say, he is a Thinker in the highest of all senses: he is a Poet. For Goethe, as for Shakspeare, the world lies all translucent, all *fusible* we might call it, encircled with WONDER; the Natural in reality the Supernatural, for to the seer's eyes both become one. What are the *Hamlets* and *Tempests*, the *Fausts* and *Mignons*, but glimpses accorded us into this translucent, wonder-encircled world; revelations of the mystery of all mysteries, Man's Life as it actually is?

Under other secondary aspects the poetical faculty of the two will still be found cognate. Goethe is full of *figurativeness;* this grand light-giving Intellect, as all such are, is an imaginative one, —and in a quite other sense than most of our unhappy Imaginatives will imagine. Gall the Craniologist declared him to be a born *Volksredner* (popular orator), both by the figure of his brow, and what was still more decisive, because 'he could not speak but a figure came.' Gall saw what was high as his own nose reached,

> High as the nose doth reach, all clear!
> What higher lies, they ask: Is it here?

A far different figurativeness was this of Goethe than popular oratory has work for. In figures of the popular-oratory kind, Goethe, throughout his Writings at least, is nowise the most copious man known to us, though on a stricter scrutiny we may find him the richest. Of your ready-made, coloured-paper metaphors, such as can be sewed or plastered on the surface, by way of giving an ornamental finish to the rag-web already woven, we speak not; there is not one such to be discovered in all his Works. But even in the use of genuine metaphors, which are not haberdashery ornament, but the genuine new vesture of new thoughts, he yields to lower men (for example to Jean Paul); that is to say, in fact, he is more master of the *common* language, and can oftener make *it* serve him. Goethe's figurativeness lies in the very centre of his being; manifests itself as the constructing of the inward elements of a thought, as the *vital* embodiment of it: such figures as those of Goethe you will look for through all modern literature, and except here and there in Shakspeare, nowhere find a trace of. Again, it is the same faculty in higher exercise, that enables the poet to construct a Character. Here too Shakspeare and Goethe, unlike innumerable others, are *vital;* their construction

begins at the *heart* and flows outward as the life-streams do; fashioning the *surface*, as it were, spontaneously. Those Macbeths and Falstaffs, accordingly, these Fausts and Philinas have a verisimilitude and life that separates them from all other fictions of late ages. All others, in comparison, have more or less the nature of hollow vizards, constructed from without inwards, painted *like*, and deceptively put in motion. Many years ago on finishing our first perusal of *Wilhelm Meister*, with a very mixed sentiment in other respects, we could not but feel that here lay more insight into the elements of human nature, and a more poetically perfect combining of these, than in all the other fictitious literature of our generation.

Neither, as an additional similarity (for the great is ever like itself), let the majestic Calmness of both be omitted; their perfect tolerance for all men and all things. This too proceeds from the same source, perfect clearness of vision: he who comprehends an object cannot hate it, has already begun to love it. In respect of style, no less than of character, this calmness and graceful smooth-flowing softness is again characteristic of both; though in Goethe the quality is more complete, having been matured by far more assiduous study. Goethe's style is perhaps to be reckoned the most excellent that our modern world, in any language, can exhibit. 'Even to a foreigner,' says one, 'it is full of character and 'secondary meanings; polished, yet vernacular and cordial, it 'sounds like the dialect of wise, antique-minded, true-hearted 'men: in poetry, brief, sharp, simple and expressive: in prose, 'perhaps still more pleasing; for it is at once concise and full, rich, 'clear, unpretending and melodious; and the sense, not presented 'in alternating flashes, piece after piece revealed and withdrawn, 'rises before us as in continuous dawning, and stands at last simul-'taneously complete, and bathed in the mellowest and ruddiest 'sunshine. It brings to mind what the prose of Hooker, Bacon, 'Milton, Browne, would have been, had they written under the 'good without the bad influences of that French precision, which 'has polished and attenuated, trimmed and impoverished all 'modern languages; made our meaning clear, and too often shallow 'as well as clear.'

Finally, as Shakspeare is to be considered as the greater nature of the two, so on the other hand we must admit him to have been the less cultivated, and much the more careless. What Shakspeare *could* have done we nowhere discover. A careless mortal, open to

the Universe and its influences, not caring strenuously to open himself; who, Prometheus-like, will scale Heaven (if it so must be), and is satisfied if he therewith pay the rent of his London Playhouse; who, had the Warwickshire Justice let him hunt deer unmolested, might, for many years more, have lived quiet on the green earth without such aerial journeys: an unparalleled mortal. In the great Goethe, again, we see a man through life at his utmost strain; a man who, as he says himself, 'struggled toughly;' laid hold of all things, under all aspects, scientific or poetic; engaged passionately with the deepest interests of man's existence, in the most complex age of man's history. What Shakspeare's thoughts on 'God, Nature, Art,' would have been, especially had he lived to number fourscore years, were curious to know: Goethe's, delivered in many-toned melody, as the apocalypse of our era, are here for us to know.

Such was the noble talent intrusted to this man; such the noble employment he made thereof. We can call him, once more, 'a clear and universal man;' we can say that, in his universality, as thinker, as singer, as worker, he lived a life of antique nobleness under these new conditions; and, in so living, is alone in all Europe; the foremost, whom others are to learn from and follow. In which great act, or rather great sum-total of many acts, who shall compute what treasure of new strengthening, of faith become hope and vision, lies secured for all! The question, Can man still live in devoutness, yet without blindness or contraction; in unconquerable steadfastness for the right, yet without tumultuous exasperation against the wrong; as an antique worthy, yet with the expansion and increased endowment of a modern? is no longer a question, but has become a certainty, and ocularly-visible fact.

We have looked at Goethe, as we engaged to do, 'on *this* side,' and with the eyes of 'this generation;' that is to say, chiefly as a world-changer, and benignant spiritual revolutionist: for in our present so astonishing condition of 'progress of the species,' such is the category under which we must try all things, wisdom itself. And, indeed, under this aspect too, Goethe's Life and Works are doubtless of incalculable value, and worthy our most earnest study: for his Spiritual History is, as it were, the ideal emblem of all true men's in these days; the goal of Manhood, which he attained, we too in our degree have to aim at; let us mark well the road he

fashioned for himself, and in the dim weltering chaos rejoice to find a paved way.

Here, moreover, another word of explanation is perhaps worth adding. We mean, in regard to the controversy agitated (as about many things pertaining to Goethe) about his Political creed and practice, Whether he was Ministerial or in Opposition? Let the political admirer of Goethe be at ease: Goethe was both, and also neither! The 'rotten whitewashed (*gebrechliche übertünchte*) condition of society' was plainer to few eyes than to his, sadder to few hearts than to his. Listen to the Epigrammatist at Venice:

> To this stithy I liken the land, the hammer its ruler,
> And the people that plate, beaten between them that writhes:
> Woe to the plate, when nothing but wilful bruises on bruises
> Hit it at random; and made, cometh no Kettle to view!

But, alas, what is to be done?

> No Apostle-of-Liberty much to my heart ever found I;
> License, each for himself, this was at bottom their want.
> Liberator of many! first dare to be Servant of many:
> What a business is that, wouldst thou know it, go try!

Let the following also be recommended to all inordinate worshippers of Septennials, Triennials, Elective Franchise, and the Shameful Parts of the Constitution; and let each be a little tolerant of his neighbour's 'festoon,' and rejoice that he has himself found out *Freedom*,—a thing much wanted:

> Walls I can see tumbled down, walls I see also a-building;
> Here sit prisoners, there likewise do prisoners sit:
> Is the world, then, itself a huge prison? Free only the madman,
> His chains knitting still up into some graceful festoon?

So that, for the Poet, what remains but to leave Conservative and Destructive pulling one another's locks and ears off, as they will and can (the ulterior issue being long since indubitable enough); and, for his own part, strive day and night to forward the small suffering remnant of *Productives;* of those who, in true manful endeavour, were it under despotism or under sansculottism, create somewhat, with whom alone, in the end, does the hope of the world lie? Go thou and do likewise! Art thou *called* to politics, work therein, as this man would have done, like a real and not an imaginary workman. Understand well, meanwhile, that to no man is his political constitution 'a life, but only a house wherein

his life is led:' and hast thou a nobler task than such *house*-pargeting and smoke-doctoring, and pulling down of ancient rotten rat-inhabited walls, leave such to the proper craftsman; honour the higher Artist, and good-humouredly say with him:

> All this is neither my coat nor my cake,
> Why fill my hand with other men's charges?
> The fishes swim at ease in the lake,
> And take no thought of the barges.

Goethe's political practice, or rather no-practice, except that of self-defence, is a part of his conduct quite inseparably coherent with the rest; a thing we could recommend to universal study, that the spirit of it might be understood by all men, and by all men imitated.

Nevertheless it is nowise alone on this revolutionary or 'progress-of-the-species' side that Goethe has significance; his Life and Work is no painted show but a solid reality, and may be looked at with profit on all sides, from all imaginable points of view. Perennial, as a possession for ever, Goethe's History and Writings abide there; a thousand-voiced 'Melody of Wisdom,' which he that has ears may hear. What the experience of the most complexly-situated, deep-searching, everyway *far-experienced* man has yielded him of insight, lies written for all men here. He who was of compass to know and feel more than any other man, this is the record of his knowledge and feeling. 'The deepest heart, the highest head to scan,' was not beyond his faculty; thus, then, did he scan and interpret: let many generations listen, according to their want; let the generation which has no need of listening, and nothing new to learn there, esteem itself a happy one.

To us, meanwhile, to all that wander in darkness and seek light, as the one thing needful, be this possession reckoned among our choicest blessings and distinctions. *Colite talem virum;* learn of him, imitate, emulate him! So did *he* catch the Music of the Universe, and unfold it into clearness, and in authentic celestial tones bring it home to the hearts of men, from amid that soul-confusing Babylonish hubbub of this our new Tower-of-Babel era! For now too, as in that old time, had men said to themselves: Come, let us build a tower which shall reach to heaven; and by our steam-engines, and logic-engines, and skilful mechanism and manipulation, vanquish not only Physical Nature, but the divine

Spirit of Nature, and scale the empyrean itself. Wherefore they must needs again be stricken with confusion of tongues (or of printing-presses); and *dispersed*,—to other work; wherein also, let us hope, their hammers and trowels shall better avail them.—

Of Goethe, with a feeling such as can be due to no other man, we now take farewell. *Vixit, vivit.*

CORN-LAW RHYMES.

CORN-LAW RHYMES.[1]

[1832.]

SMELFUNGUS REDIVIVUS, throwing down his critical assaying balance some years ago, and taking leave of the Belles-Lettres function, expressed himself in this abrupt way: 'The end having come, it is fit that we end. Poetry having ceased to be read, or published, or written, how can it continue to be reviewed? With your Lake Schools, and Border-Thief Schools, and Cockney and Satanic Schools, there has been enough to do; and now, all these Schools having burnt or smouldered themselves out, and left nothing but a wide-spread wreck of ashes, dust and cinders,—or perhaps dying embers, kicked to and fro under the feet of innumerable women and children in the Magazines, and at best blown here and there into transient sputters, with vapour enough, so as to form what you might name a boundless Green-sick, or New-Sentimental, or Sleep-Awake School,—what remains but to adjust ourselves to circumstances? Urge me not,' continues the able Editor, suddenly changing his figure, 'with considerations that Poetry, as the inward voice of Life, must be perennial, only dead in one form to become alive in another; that this still abundant deluge of Metre, seeing there must needs be fractions of Poetry floating scattered in it, ought still to be net-fished, at all events surveyed and taken note of: the survey of English Metre, at this epoch, perhaps transcends the human faculties; to hire-out the

[1] EDINBURGH REVIEW, No. 110.—1. *Corn-Law Rhymes.* Third Edition. 8vo. London, 1831.

2. *Love; a Poem.* By the Author of "Corn-Law Rhymes." Third Edition. 8vo. London, 1831.

3. *The Village Patriarch; a Poem.* By the Author of "Corn-Law Rhymes." 12mo. London, 1831.

'reading of it, by estimate, at a remunerative rate per page, would, 'in few Quarters, reduce the cash-box of any extant Review to the 'verge of insolvency.'

What our distinguished contemporary has said remains said. Far be it from us to censure or counsel any able Editor; to draw aside the Editorial veil, and, officiously prying into his interior mysteries, impugn the laws he walks by! For Editors, as for others, there are times of perplexity, wherein the cunning of the wisest will scantily suffice his own wants, to say nothing of his neighbour's.

To us, on our side, meanwhile, it remains clear that Poetry, or were it but Metre, should nowise be altogether neglected. Surely it is the Reviewer's trade to sit watching not only the tillage, crop-rotation, marketings and good or evil husbandry of the Economic Earth, but also the weather-symptoms of the Literary Heaven, on which those former so much depend: if any promising or threatening meteoric phenomenon make its appearance, and he proclaim not tidings thereof, it is at his peril. Farther, be it considered how, in this singular poetic epoch, a small matter constitutes a novelty. If the whole welkin hang overcast in drizzly dinginess, the feeblest light-gleam, or speck of blue, cannot pass unheeded.

The Works of this Corn-Law Rhymer we might liken rather to some little fraction of a rainbow: hues of joy and harmony, painted out of troublous tears. No round full bow, indeed; gloriously spanning the heavens; shone on by the full sun; and, with seven-striped, gold-crimson border (as is in some sort the office of Poetry) dividing Black from Brilliant: not such; alas, still far from it! Yet, in very truth, a little prismatic blush, glowing genuine among the wet clouds; which proceeds, if you will, from a sun cloud-hidden, yet indicates that a sun does shine, and above those vapours, a whole azure vault and celestial firmament stretch serene.

Strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless true, that here we have once more got sight of a Book calling itself Poetry, yet which actually is a kind of Book, and no empty pasteboard Case, and simulacrum or 'ghost-defunct' of a Book, such as is too often palmed on the world, and handed over Booksellers' counters, with a demand of real money for it, as if it too were a reality. The speaker here is of that singular class who have something to say; whereby, though delivering himself in verse, and in these days, he does not deliver himself wholly in jargon, but articulately, and with a certain degree of meaning, that has been *believed*, and therefore is again believable.

To some the wonder and interest will be heightened by another ircumstance: that the speaker in question is not school-learned, r even furnished with pecuniary capital; is, indeed, a quite un- ioneyed, russet-coated speaker; nothing or little other than a heffield worker in brass and iron, who describes himself as 'one f the lower, little removed above the lowest class.' Be of what lass he may, the man is provided, as we can perceive, with a ational god-created soul; which too has fashioned itself into some learness, some self-subsistence, and can actually see and know with s own organs; and in rugged substantial English, nay with tones f poetic melody, utter forth what it has seen.

It used to be said that lions do not paint, that poor men do not rite; but the case is altering now. Here is a voice coming from he deep Cyclopean forges, where Labour, in real soot and sweat eats with his thousand hammers 'the red son of the furnace;' oing personal battle with Necessity, and her dark brute Powers, o make them reasonable and serviceable; an intelligible voice from he hitherto Mute and Irrational, to tell us at first-hand how it is vith him, what in very deed is the theorem of the world and of iimself, which he, in those dim depths of his, in that wearied head f his, has put together. To which voice, in several respects signifi- ant enough, let good ear be given.

Here too be it premised, that nowise under the category of Uneducated Poets,' or in any fashion of dilettante patronage, can ur Sheffield friend be produced. His position is unsuitable for hat: so is ours. Genius, which the French lady declared to be of o sex, is much more certainly of no rank; neither when 'the spark f Nature's fire' has been imparted, should Education take high irs in her artificial light,—which is too often but phosphorescence nd putrescence. In fact, it now begins to be suspected here and here, that this same aristocratic recognition, which looks down with an obliging smile from its throne, of bound Volumes and gold Ingots, and admits that it is wonderfully well for one of the uneduated classes, may be getting out of place. There are unhappy imes in the world's history, when he that is the least educated will chiefly have to say that he is the least perverted; and with he multitude of false eye-glasses, convex, concave, green, even ellow, has not lost the natural use of his eyes. For a generation hat reads Cobbett's Prose, and Burns's Poetry, it need be no miracle hat here also is a man who can handle both pen and hammer like a man.

Nevertheless, this serene-highness attitude and temper is so frequent, perhaps it were good to turn the tables for a moment, and see what look it has under that reverse aspect. How were it if we surmised, that for a man gifted with natural vigour, with a man's character to be developed in him, more especially if in the way of Literature, as Thinker and Writer, it is actually, in these strange days, no special misfortune to be trained up among the Uneducated classes, and not among the Educated; but rather of two misfortunes the smaller?

For all men, doubtless, obstructions abound; spiritual growth must be hampered and stunted, and has to struggle through with difficulty, if it do not wholly stop. We may grant, too, that, for a mediocre character, the continual training and tutoring, from language-masters, dancing-masters, posture-masters of all sorts, hired and volunteer, which a high rank in any time and country assures, there will be produced a certain superiority, or at worst, air of superiority, over the corresponding mediocre character of low rank: thus we perceive the vulgar Do-nothing, as contrasted with the vulgar Drudge, is in general a much prettier man; with a wider, perhaps clearer outlook into the distance; in innumerable superficial matters, however it may be when we go deeper, he has a manifest advantage. But with the man of uncommon character, again, in whom a germ of irrepressible Force has been implanted, and *will* unfold itself into some sort of freedom, altogether the reverse may hold. For such germs too, there is, undoubtedly enough, a proper soil where they will grow best, and an improper one where they will grow worst. True also, where there is a will, there is a way; where a genius has been given, a possibility, a certainty of its growing is also given. Yet often it seems as if the injudicious gardening and manuring were worse than none at all; and killed what the inclemencies of blind chance would have spared. We find accordingly that few Fredericks or Napoleons, indeed none since the Great Alexander, who unfortunately drank himself to death too soon for proving what lay in him, were nursed up with an eye to their vocation: mostly with an eye quite the other way, in the midst of isolation and pain, destitution and contradiction. Nay in our own times, have we not seen two men of genius, a Byron and a Burns; they both, by mandate of Nature, struggle and must struggle towards clear Manhood, stormfully enough, for the space of six-and-thirty years; yet only the gifted Ploughman can partially prevail therein: the gifted Peer must toil and strive, and shoot-out

in wild efforts, yet die at last in Boyhood, with the promise of his Manhood still but announcing itself in the distance. Truly, as was once written, 'it is only the artichoke that will not grow except in 'gardens; the acorn is cast carelessly abroad into the wilderness, 'yet on the wild soil it nourishes itself, and rises to be an oak.' All woodmen, moreover, will tell you that fat manure is the ruin of your oak; likewise that the thinner and wilder your soil, the tougher, more iron-textured is your timber,—though unhappily also the smaller. So too with the spirits of men: they become pure from their errors by suffering for them; he who has battled, were it only with Poverty and hard toil, will be found stronger, more expert, than he who could stay at home from the battle, concealed among the Provision-wagons, or even not unwatchfully 'abiding by the stuff.' In which sense, an observer, not without experience of our time, has said: Had I a man of clearly developed character (clear, sincere within its limits), of insight, courage and real applicable force of head and of heart, to search for; and not a man of luxuriously distorted character, with haughtiness for courage, and for insight and applicable force, speculation and plausible show of force,—it were rather among the lower than among the higher classes that I should look for him.

A hard saying, indeed, seems this same: that he, whose other wants were all beforehand supplied; to whose capabilities no problem was presented except even this, How to cultivate them to best advantage, should attain less real culture than he whose first grand problem and obligation was nowise spiritual culture, but hard labour for his daily bread! Sad enough must the perversion be, where preparations of such magnitude issue in abortion; and so sumptuous an Art with all its appliances can accomplish nothing, not so much as necessitous Nature would of herself have supplied! Nevertheless, so pregnant is Life with evil as with good; to such height in an age rich, plethorically overgrown with means, can means be accumulated in the wrong place, and immeasurably aggravate wrong tendencies, instead of righting them, this sad and strange result may actually turn out to have been realised.

But what, after all, is meant by *uneducated*, in a time when Books have come into the world; come to be household furniture in every habitation of the civilised world? In the poorest cottage are Books; is one BOOK, wherein for several thousands of years the spirit of man has found light, and nourishment, and an interpreting response to whatever is Deepest in him; wherein still,

to this day, for the eye that will look well, the Mystery of Existence reflects itself, if not resolved, yet revealed, and prophetically emblemed; if not to the satisfying of the outward sense, yet to the opening of the inward sense, which is the far grander result. 'In Books lie the creative phœnix-ashes of the whole Past.' All that men have devised, discovered, done, felt or imagined, lies recorded in Books; wherein whoso has learned the mystery of spelling printed letters may find it, and appropriate it.

Nay, what indeed is all this? As if it were by universities and libraries and lecture-rooms, that man's Education, what we can call Education, were accomplished; solely, or mainly, by instilling the dead letter and record of other men's Force, that the living Force of a new man were to be awakened, enkindled and purified into victorious clearness! Foolish Pedant, that sittest there compassionately descanting on the Learning of Shakspeare! Shakspeare had penetrated into innumerable things; far into Nature with her divine Splendours and infernal Terrors, her Ariel Melodies, and mystic mandragora Moans; far into man's workings with Nature, into man's Art and Artifice; Shakspeare knew (*kenned*, which in those days still partially meant *can-ned*) innumerable things; what men are, and what the world is, and how and what men aim at there, from the Dame Quickly of modern Eastcheap to the Cæsar of ancient Rome, over many countries, over many centuries: of all this he had the clearest understanding and constructive comprehension; all this was his Learning and Insight; what now is thine? Insight into none of those things; perhaps, strictly considered, into no thing whatever: solely into thy own sheepskin diplomas, fat academic honours, into vocables and alphabetic letters, and but a little way into these!—The grand result of schooling is a mind with just vision to discern, with free force to do: the grand schoolmaster is Practice.

And now, when *kenning* and *can-ning* have become two altogether different words; and this, the first principle of human culture, the foundation-stone of all but false imaginary culture, that men must, before every other thing, be trained to *do* somewhat, has been, for some generations, laid quietly on the shelf, with such result as we see,—consider what advantage those same uneducated Working classes have over the educated Unworking classes, in one particular; herein, namely, that they must *work*. To work! What incalculable sources of cultivation lie in that process, in that attempt; how it lays hold of the whole man, not of a small

theoretical calculating fraction of him, but of the whole practical, doing and daring and enduring man; thereby to awaken dormant faculties, root-out old errors, at every step! He that has done nothing has known nothing. Vain is it to sit scheming and plausibly discoursing: up and be doing! If thy knowledge be real, put it forth from thee: grapple with real Nature; try thy theories there, and see how they hold out. *Do* one thing, for the first time in thy life do a thing; a new light will rise to thee on the doing of all things whatsoever. Truly, a boundless significance lies in work; whereby the humblest craftsman comes to attain much, which is of indispensable use, but which he who is of no craft, were he never so high, runs the risk of missing. Once turn to Practice, Error and Truth will no longer consort together: the result of Error involves you in the square-root of a negative quantity; try to *extract* that, to extract any earthly substance or sustenance from that! The honourable Member can discover that 'there is a reaction,' and believe it, and wearisomely reason on it, in spite of all men, while he so pleases, for still his wine and his oil will not fail him: but the sooty Brazier, who discovered that brass was green-cheese, has to act on his discovery; finds therefore, that, singular as it may seem, brass cannot be masticated for dinner, green-cheese will not beat into fire-proof dishes; that such discovery, therefore, has no legs to stand on, and must even be let fall. Now, take this principle of difference through the entire lives of two men, and calculate what it will amount to! Necessity, moreover, which we here see as the mother of Accuracy, is well known as the mother of Invention. He who wants everything must know many things, do many things, to procure even a few: different enough with him, whose indispensable knowledge is this only, that a finger will pull the bell!

So that, for all men who live, we may conclude, this Life of Man is a school, wherein the naturally foolish will continue foolish though you bray him in a mortar, but the naturally wise will gather wisdom under every disadvantage. What, meanwhile, must be the condition of an Era, when the highest advantages there become perverted into drawbacks; when, if you take two men of genius, and put the one between the handles of a plough, and mount the other between the painted coronets of a coach-and-four, and bid them both move along, the former shall arrive a Burns, the latter a Byron: two men of talent, and put the one into a Printer's chapel, full of lamp-black, tyrannous usage, hard toil, and the other into Oxford universities, with lexicons and

libraries, and hired expositors and sumptuous endowments, the former shall come out a Dr. Franklin, the latter a Dr. Parr!—

However, we are not here to write an Essay on Education, or sing *miscreres* over a 'world in its dotage;' but simply to say that our Corn-Law Rhymer, educated or uneducated as Nature and Art have made him, asks not the smallest patronage or compassion for his rhymes, professes not the smallest contrition for them. Nowise in such attitude does he present himself; not supplicatory, deprecatory, but sturdy, defiant, almost menacing. Wherefore, indeed, should he supplicate or deprecate? It is out of the abundance of the heart that he has spoken: praise or blame cannot make it truer or falser than it already is. By the grace of God this man is sufficient for himself; by his skill in metallurgy can beat out a toilsome but a manful living, go how it may; has arrived too at that singular audacity of believing what he knows, and acting on it, or writing on it, or thinking on it, without leave asked of any one: there shall he stand, and work, with head and with hand, for himself and the world; blown about by no wind of doctrine; frightened at no Reviewer's shadow; having, in his time, looked substances enough in the face, and remained unfrightened.

What is left, therefore, but to take what he brings, and as he brings it? Let us be thankful, were it only for the day of small things. Something it is that we have lived to welcome once more a sweet Singer wearing the likeness of a Man. In humble guise, it is true, and of stature more or less marred in its development; yet not without a genial robustness, strength and valour built on honesty and love; on the whole, a genuine man, with somewhat of the eye and speech and bearing that beseems a man. To whom all other genuine men, how different soever in subordinate particulars, can gladly hold out the right hand of fellowship.

The great excellence of our Rhymer, be it understood, then, we take to consist even in this, often hinted at already, that he is *genuine*. Here is an earnest truth-speaking man; no theoriser, sentimentaliser, but a practical man of work and endeavour, man of sufferance and endurance. The thing that he speaks is not a hearsay, but a thing which he has himself known, and by experience become assured of. He has used his eyes for seeing; uses his tongue for declaring what he has seen. His voice, therefore, among the many noises of our Planet, will deserve its place better than the most; will be well worth some attention. Whom else

ıould we attend to but such? The man who speaks with some alf shadow of a Belief, and supposes, and inclines to think; and ɔnsiders not with undivided soul, what is true, but only what is lausible, and will find audience and recompense: do we not meet im at every street-turning, on all highways and byways; is he ot stale, unprofitable, ineffectual, wholly grown a weariness of the esh? So rare is his opposite in any rank of Literature or of ıife, so very rare, that even in the lowest he is precious. The uthentic insight and experience of any human soul, were it but ɑsight and experience in hewing of wood and drawing of water, ɜ real knowledge, a real possession and acquirement, how small oever: *palabra*, again, were it a supreme pontiff's, is wind merely, nd nothing, or less than nothing. To a considerable degree, this ɑan, we say, has worked himself loose from cant and conjectural ıalfness, idle pretences and hallucinations, into a condition of Sinerity. Wherein, perhaps, as above argued, his hard social environnent, and fortune to be 'a workman born,' which brought so many ıther retardations with it, may have forwarded and accelerated him.

That a man, Workman or Idleman, encompassed, as in these lays, with persons in a state of willing or unwilling Insincerity, and ıecessitated, as man is, to learn whatever he does traditionally learn ɔy *imitating* these, should nevertheless shake off Insincerity, and truggle out from that dim pestiferous marsh-atmosphere, into a ılearer and purer height,—betokens in him a certain Originality; n which rare gift, force of all kinds is presupposed. To our Rhymer, accordingly, as hinted more than once, vision and deternination have not been denied: a rugged, homegrown understandng is in him; whereby, in his own way, he has mastered this and ıhat, and looked into various things, in general honestly and to ɔurpose, sometimes deeply, piercingly and with a Seer's eye. Strong thoughts are not wanting, beautiful thoughts; strong and ɔeautiful expressions of thought. As traceable, for instance, in ıhis new illustration of an old argument, the mischief of Commercial Restrictions:

> These, O ye quacks, these are your remedies:
> Alms for the Rich, a bread-tax for the Poor!
> Soul-purchased harvests on the indigent moor!—
> Thus the winged victor of a hundred fights,
> The warrior Ship, bows low her banner'd head,
> When through her planks the seaborn reptile bites
> Its deadly way;—and sinks in Ocean's bed,

Vanquish'd by worms. What then? The worms were fed.
Will not God smite thee black, thou whited wall?
Thy life is lawless, and thy law a lie,
Or Nature is a dream unnatural:
Look on the clouds, the streams, the earth, the sky;
Lo, all is interchange and harmony!
Where is the gorgeous pomp which, yester morn,
Curtained yon Orb with amber, fold on fold?
Behold it in the blue of Rivelin, borne
To feed the all-feeding sea! The molten gold
Is flowing pale in Loxley's waters cold,
To kindle into beauty tree and flower,
And wake to verdant life hill, vale and plain.
Cloud trades with river, and exchange is power:
But should the clouds, the streams, the winds disdain
Harmonious intercourse, nor dew nor rain
Would forest-crown the mountains: airless day
Would blast on Kinderscout the healthy glow;
No purply green would meeken into gray
O'er Don at eve; no sound of river's flow
Disturb the Sepulchre of all below.

Nature and the doings of men have not passed by this man unheeded, like the endless cloud-rack in dull weather; or lightly heeded, like a theatric phantasmagoria; but earnestly inquired into, like a thing of reality; reverently loved and worshipped, as a thing with divine significance in its reality, glimpses of which divineness he has caught and laid to heart. For his vision, as was said, partakes of the genuinely Poetical; he is not a Rhymer and Speaker only, but, in some genuine sense, something of a Poet.

Farther, we must admit him, what indeed is already herein admitted, to be, if clear-sighted, also brave-hearted. A troublous element is his; a Life of painfulness, toil, insecurity, scarcity; yet he fronts it like a man; yields not to it, tames it into some subjection, some order; its wild fearful dinning and tumult, as of a devouring Chaos, becomes a sort of wild war-music for him; wherein too are passages of beauty, of melodious melting softness, of lightness and briskness, even of joy. The stout heart is also a warm and kind one; Affection dwells with Danger, all the holier and the lovelier for such stern environment. A working man is this; yet, as we said, a man: in his sort, a courageous, much-loving, faithfully enduring and endeavouring man.

What such a one, so gifted and so placed, shall say to a Time ke ours; how he will fashion himself into peace, or war, or armed eutrality, with the world and his fellow-men; and work out his ourse in joy and grief, in victory and defeat, is a question worth sking: which in these three little Volumes partly receives answer. Ie has turned, as all thinkers up to a very high and rare order 1 these days must do, into Politics; is a Reformer, at least a tern Complainer, Radical to the core: his poetic melody takes an legiaco-tragical character; much of him is converted into hostility, nd grim, hardly-suppressed indignation, such as right long denied, ope long deferred, may awaken in the kindliest heart. Not yet s a rebel against anything does he stand; but as a free man, and he spokesman of free men, not far from rebelling against much; 'ith sorrowful appealing dew, yet also with incipient lightning, in is eyes; whom it were not desirable to provoke into rebellion. Ie says in Vulcanic dialect, his feelings have been *hammered* till hey are *cold-short;* so they will no longer bend; 'they snap, and y off,'—in the face of the hammerer. Not unnatural, though mentable! Nevertheless, under all disguises of the Radical, ie Poet is still recognisable: a certain music breathes through ll dissonances, as the prophecy and ground-tone of returning armony; the man, as we said, is of a poetical nature.

To his Political Philosophy there is perhaps no great importance ttachable. He feels, as all men that live must do, the disorganation, and hard-grinding, unequal pressure of our Social Affairs; ut sees into it only a very little farther than far inferior men o. The frightful condition of a Time, when public and private rinciple, as the word was once understood, having gone out of ght, and Self-interest being left to plot, and struggle, and ramble, as it could and would, Difficulties had accumulated till ey were no longer to be borne, and the spirit that should have onted and conquered them seemed to have forsaken the world;—hen the Rich, as the utmost they could resolve on, had ceased to overn, and the Poor, in their fast-accumulating numbers, and er-widening complexities, had ceased to be able to do without overning; and now the plan of 'Competition' and '*Laissez-faire*' as, on every side, approaching its consummation; and each, ound-up in the circle of his own wants and perils, stood grimly strustful of his neighbour, and the distracted Common-weal was Common-woe, and to all men it became apparent that the end as drawing nigh:—all this black aspect of Ruin and Decay

visible enough, experimentally known to our Sheffield friend, he calls by the name of 'Corn-Law,' and expects to be in good part delivered from, were the accursed Bread-tax repealed.

In this system of political Doctrine, even as here so emphatically set forth, there is not much of novelty. Radicals we have many; loud enough on this and other grievances; the removal of which is to be the one thing needful. The deep, wide flood of bitterness, and hope becoming hopeless, lies acrid, corrosive in every bosom; and flows fiercely enough through any orifice Accident may open: through Law-Reform, Legislative Reform, Poor-Laws, want of Poor-Laws, Tithes, Game-Laws, or, as we see here, Corn-Laws. Whereby indeed only this becomes clear, that a deep wide flood of evil does exist and corrode; from which, in all ways, blindly and seeingly, men seek deliverance, and cannot rest till they find it; least of all till they know what part and proportion of it is to *be* found. But with us foolish sons of Adam this is ever the way: some evil that lies nearest us, be it a chronic sickness, or but a smoky chimney, is ever the acme and sum-total of all evil; the black hydra that shuts us out from a Promised Land; and so, in poor Mr. Shandy's fashion, must we 'shift from trouble to trouble, and from side to 'side; button-up one cause of vexation, and unbutton another.'

Thus for our keen-hearted singer, and sufferer, has the 'Bread-tax,' in itself a considerable but no immeasurable smoke-pillar, swoln out to be a world-embracing Darkness, that darkens and suffocates the whole earth, and has blotted out the heavenly stars. Into the merit of the Corn-Laws, which has often been discussed, in fit season, by competent hands, we do not enter here; least of all in the way of argument, in the way of blame, towards one who, if he read such merit with some emphasis 'on the scantier trenchers of his children,' may well be pardoned. That the 'Bread-tax,' with various other taxes, may ere long be altered and abrogated, and the Corn-Trade become as free as the poorest 'bread-taxed drudge' could wish it, or the richest 'satrap bread-tax-fed' could fear it, seems no extravagant hypothesis: would that the mad Time could, by such simple hellebore-dose, be healed! Alas for the diseases of a world lying in wickedness, in heart-sickness and atrophy, quite another alcahest is needed;—a long, painful course of medicine and regimen, surgery and physic, not yet specified or indicated in the Royal-College Books!

But if there is little novelty in our friend's Political Philosophy, there is some in his political Feeling and Poetry. The peculiarity

of this Radical is, that with all his stormful destructiveness he combines a decided loyalty and faith. If he despise and trample under foot on the one hand, he exalts and reverences on the other; the 'landed pauper in his coach-and-four' rolls all the more glaringly, contrasted with the 'Rockinghams and Savilles' of the past, with the 'Lansdowns and Fitzwilliams,' many a 'Wentworth's lord,' still 'a blessing' to the present. This man, indeed, has in him the root of all reverence,—a principle of Religion. He believes in a Godhead, not with the lips only, but apparently with the heart; who, as has been written, and often felt, 'reveals Himself in Parents, in all true Teachers and Rulers,'—as in false Teachers and Rulers quite Another may be revealed! Our Rhymer, it would seem, is no Methodist: far enough from it. He makes 'the Ranter,' in his hot-headed way, exclaim over

The Hundred Popes of England's Jesuistry;

and adds, by way of note, in his own person, some still stronger sayings: How 'this baneful corporation, dismal as its Reign of 'Terror is, and long-armed its Holy Inquisition, must condescend 'to learn and teach what is useful, or go where all nuisances go.' As little perhaps is he a Churchman; the 'Cadi-Dervish' seems nowise to his mind. Scarcely, however, if at all, does he show aversion to the Church as Church; or, among his many griefs, touch upon Tithes as one. But, in any case, the black colours of Life, even as here painted, and brooded over, do not hide from him that a God is the Author and Sustainer thereof; that God's world, if made a House of Imprisonment, can also be a House of Prayer; wherein for the weary and heavy-laden pity and hope are not altogether cut away.

It is chiefly in virtue of this inward temper of heart, with the clear disposition and adjustment which for all else results therefrom, that our Radical attains to be Poetical; that the harsh groanings, contentions, upbraidings, of one who unhappily has felt constrained to adopt such mode of utterance, become ennobled into something of music. If a land of bondage, this is still his Father's land, and the bondage endures not forever. As worshipper and believer, the captive can look with seeing eye: the aspect of the Infinite Universe still fills him with an Infinite feeling; his chains, were it but for moments, fall away; he soars free aloft, and the sunny regions of Poesy and Freedom gleam golden afar on the widened horizon. Gleamings we say, prophetic dawnings from

those far regions, spring up for him; nay, beams of actual radiance. In his ruggedness, and dim contractedness (rather of place than of organ), he is not without touches of a feeling and vision, which, even in the stricter sense, is to be named poetical.

One deeply poetical idea, above all others, seems to have taken hold of him: the idea of TIME. As was natural to a poetic soul, with few objects of Art in its environment, and driven inward, rather than invited outward, for occupation. This deep mystery of ever-flowing Time; bringing forth, and as the Ancients wisely fabled, devouring what it has brought forth; rushing on, *in* us, yet above us, all uncontrollable by us; and under it, dimly visible athwart it, the bottomless Eternal;—this is, indeed, what we may call the primary idea of Poetry; the first that introduces itself into the poetic mind. As here:

> The bee shall seek to settle on his hand,
> But from the vacant bench haste to the moor,
> Mourning the last of England's high-soul'd Poor,
> And bid the mountains weep for Enoch Wray.
> And for themselves,—albeit of things that last
> Unalter'd most; for they shall pass away
> Like Enoch, though their iron roots seem fast,
> Bound to the eternal future as the past:
> The Patriarch died; and they shall be no more!
> Yes, and the sailless worlds, which navigate
> The unutterable Deep that hath no shore,
> Will lose their starry splendour soon or late,
> Like tapers, quench'd by Him, whose will is fate!
> Yes, and the Angel of Eternity,
> Who numbers worlds and writes their names in light,
> One day, O Earth, will look in vain for thee,
> And start and stop in his unerring flight,
> And with his wings of sorrow and affright
> Veil his impassion'd brow and heavenly tears!

And not the first idea only, but the greatest, properly the parent of all others. For if it can rise in the remotest ages, in the rudest states of culture, wherever an 'inspired thinker' happens to exist, it connects itself still with all great things; with the highest results of new Philosophy, as of primeval Theology; and for the Poet, in particular, is as the life-element, wherein alone his conceptions can take poetic form and the whole world become miraculous and magical.

We *are such stuff*
As Dreams are made of: and our little life
Is rounded with a Sleep!

Figure that, believe that, O Reader; then say whether the *Arabian Tales* seem wonderful!—'Rounded with a sleep (*mit 'Schlaf umgeben*)!' says Jean Paul; 'these three words created 'whole volumes in me.'

To turn now on our worthy Rhymer, who has brought us so much, and stingily insist on his errors and shortcomings, were no honest procedure. We should have the whole poetical encyclopædia to draw upon, and say commodiously, such and such an item is *not* here; of which encyclopædia the highest genius can fill but a portion. With much merit, far from common in his time, he is not without something of the faults of his time. We praised him for originality; yet is there a certain remainder of imitation in him; a tang of the Circulating Libraries; as in Sancho's wine, with its key and thong, there was a tang of iron and leather. To be reminded of Crabbe, with his truthful severity of style, in such a place, we cannot object; but what if there were a slight bravura dash of the fair tuneful Hemans? Still more, what have we to do with Byron, and his fierce vociferous mouthings, whether 'passionate,' or not passionate and only theatrical? King Cambyses' vein is, after all, but a worthless one; no vein for a wise man. Strength, if that be the thing aimed at, does not manifest itself in spasms, but in stout bearing of burdens. Our Author says, 'It is too bad 'to exalt into a hero the coxcomb who would have gone into 'hysterics if a tailor had laughed at him.' Walk not in his footsteps, then, we say, whether as hero or as singer; repent a little, for example, over somewhat in that fuliginous, blue-flaming, pitch-and-sulphur 'Dream of Enoch Wray,' and write the next otherwise.

We mean no imitation in a bad palpable sense; only that there is a tone of such occasionally audible, which ought to be removed; —of which, in any case, we make not much. Imitation is a leaning on something foreign; incompleteness of individual development, defect of free utterance. From the same source spring most of our Author's faults; in particular, his worst, which, after all, is intrinsically a defect of manner. He has little or no Humour. Without Humour of character he cannot well be; but it has not yet got to utterance. Thus, where he has mean things to deal with, he knows not how to deal with them; oftenest deals with them more or less meanly. In his vituperative prose Notes, he

seems embarrassed; and but ill hides his embarrassment, under an air of predetermined sarcasm, of knowing briskness, almost of vulgar pertness. He says, he cannot help it; he is poor, hard-worked, and 'soot is soot.' True, indeed; yet there is no connexion between Poverty and Discourtesy; which latter originates in Dulness alone. Courtesy is the due of man to man; not of suit-of-clothes to suit-of-clothes. He who could master so many things, and make even Corn-Laws rhyme, we require of him this farther thing: a bearing worthy of himself, and of the order he belongs to, —the highest and most ancient of all orders, that of Manhood. A pert snappishness is no manner for a brave man; and then the manner so soon influences the matter: a far worse result. Let him speak wise things, and speak them wisely; which latter may be done in many dialects, grave and gay, only in the snappish dialect seldom or never.

The truth is, as might have been expected, there is still much lying in him to be developed; the hope of which development it were rather sad to abandon. Why, for example, should not his view of the world, his knowledge of what is and has been in the world, indefinitely extend itself? Were he merely the 'uneducated Poet,' we should say, he had read largely; as he is not such, we say, Read still more, much more largely. Books enough there are in England, and of quite another weight and worth than that circulating-library sort; may be procured too, may be read, even by a hard-worked man; for what man (either in God's service or the Devil's, as himself chooses it) is not hard-worked? But here again, where there is a will there is a way. True, our friend is no longer in his teens; yet still, as would seem, in the vigour of his years: we hope too that his mind is not finally shut-in, but of the improvable and enlargeable sort. If Alfieri (also kept busy enough, with horse-breaking and what not) learned Greek after he was fifty, why is the Corn-Law Rhymer too old to learn?

However, be in the future what there may, our Rhymer has already done what was much more difficult, and better than reading printed books;—looked into the great prophetic manuscript Book of Existence, and read little passages there. Here, for example, is a sentence tolerably spelled:

> Where toils the Mill by ancient woods embraced,
> Hark, how the cold steel screams in hissing fire!
> Blind Enoch sees the Grinder's wheel no more.
> Couch'd beneath rocks and forests, that admire

Their beauty in the waters, ere they roar
Dash'd in white foam the swift circumference o'er.
There draws the Grinder his laborious breath;
There coughing at his deadly trade he bends:
Born to die young, he fears nor man nor death;
Scorning the future, what he earns he spends;
Debauch and riot are his bosom friends.

* * * * *

Behold his failings! Hath he virtues too?
He is no Pauper, blackguard though he be:
Full well he knows what minds combined can do,
Full well maintains his birthright: he is free,
And, frown for frown, outstares monopoly.
Yet Abraham and Elliot both in vain
Bid science on his cheek prolong the bloom:
He *will* not live! He seems in haste to gain
The undisturb'd asylum of the tomb,
And, old at two-and-thirty, meets his doom!

is, 'of Jem, the rogue avowed,'

Whose trade is Poaching! Honest Jem works not,
Begs not, but thrives by plundering beggars here.
Wise as a lord, and quite as good a shot,
He, like his betters, lives in hate and fear,
And feeds on partridge because bread is dear.
Sire of six sons apprenticed to the jail,
He prowls in arms, the Tory of the night;
With them he shares his battles and his ale,
With him they feel the majesty of might,
No Despot better knows that Power is Right.
Mark his unpaidish sneer, his lordly frown;
Hark how he calls the beadle and flunky liars;
See how magnificently he breaks down
His neighbour's fence, if so his will requires,
And how his struttle emulates the squire's!

* * * * *

Jem rises with the Moon; but when she sinks,
Homeward with sack-like pockets, and quick heels,
Hungry as boroughmongering gowl, he slinks.
He reads not, writes not, thinks not, scarcely feels;
Steals all he gets; serves Hell with all he steals!

is rustic, rude existence; barren moors, with the smoke of es rising over the waste expanse. Alas, no Arcadia; but the

actual dwelling-place of actual toil-grimed sons of Tubalcain: yet are there blossoms, and the wild natural fragrance of gorse and broom; yet has the Craftsman pauses in his toil; the Craftsman too has an inheritance in Earth, and even in Heaven:

> Light! All is not corrupt, for thou art pure,
> Unchanged and changeless. Though frail man is vile,
> Thou look'st on him; serene, sublime, secure,
> Yet, like thy Father, with a pitying smile.
> Even on this wintry day, as marble cold,
> Angels might quit their home to visit thee,
> And match their plumage with thy mantle roll'd
> Beneath God's Throne, o'er billows of a sea
> Whose isles are Worlds, whose bounds Infinity.
> Why, then, is Enoch absent from my side?
> I miss the rustle of his silver hair;
> A guide no more, I seem to want a guide,
> While Enoch journeys to the house of prayer;
> Ah, ne'er came Sabbath-day but he was there!
> Lo how, like him, erect and strong though gray,
> Yon village-tower time-touch'd to God appeals!
> And hark! the chimes of morning die away:
> Hark! to the heart the solemn sweetness steals,
> Like the heart's voice, unfelt by none who feels
> That God is Love, that Man is living Dust;
> Unfelt by none whom ties of brotherhood
> Link to his kind; by none who puts his trust
> In nought of Earth that hath survived the Flood,
> Save those mute charities, by which the good
> Strengthen poor worms, and serve their Maker best.
> Hail, Sabbath! Day of mercy, peace and rest!
> Thou o'er loud cities throw'st a noiseless spell;
> The hammer there, the wheel, the saw molest
> Pale Thought no more: o'er Trade's contentious hell
> Meek Quiet spreads her wings invisible.
> And when thou com'st, less silent are the fields,
> Through whose sweet paths the toil-freed townsman steals.
> To him the very air a banquet yields.
> Envious he watches the poised hawk that wheels
> His flight on chainless winds. Each cloud reveals
> A paradise of beauty to his eye.
> His little Boys are with him, seeking flowers,
> Or chasing the too-venturous gilded fly.

So by the daisy's side he spends the hours,
Renewing friendship with the budding bowers:
And while might, beauty, good without alloy,
Are mirror'd in his children's happy eyes,—
In His great Temple offering thankful joy
To Him, the infinitely Great and Wise,
With soul attuned to Nature's harmonies,
Serene and cheerful as a sporting child,—
His *heart* refuses to believe that man
Could turn into a hell the blooming wild,
The blissful country where his childhood ran
A race with infant rivers, ere began—

king-humbling' Bread-tax, 'blind Misrule,' and several other obed things!

And so our Corn-Law Rhymer plays his part. In this wise s he indite and act his Drama of Life, which for him is all-too mestic-Tragical. It is said, 'the good actor soon makes us get the bad theatre, were it but a barn; while, again, nothing nders so apparent the badness of the bad actor as a theatre of culiar excellence.' How much more in a theatre and drama h as these of Life itself! One other item, however, we must e in that ill-decorated Sheffield theatre: the back-scene and tom-decoration of it all; which is no other than a Workhouse. s, the Workhouse is the bourne whither all these actors and kers are bound; whence none that has once passed it returns! bodeful sound, like the rustle of approaching world-devouring nadoes, quivers through their whole existence; and the voice it is, Pauperism! The thanksgiving they offer up to Heaven that they are not yet Paupers; the earnest cry of their prayer hat 'God would shield them from the bitterness of Parish Pay.' Mournful enough, that a white European Man must pray wisty for what the horse he drives is sure of,—That the strain of whole faculties may not fail to earn him food and lodging. urnful that a gallant manly spirit, with an eye to discern the ld, a heart to reverence it, a hand cunning and willing to labour t, must be haunted with such a fear. The grim end of it all, gary! A soul loathing, what true souls ever loath, Dependence, p from the unworthy to help; yet sucked into the world-whirl-l,—able to do no other: the highest in man's heart struggling nly against the lowest in man's destiny! In good truth, if

many a sickly and sulky Byron, or Byronlet, glooming over the woes of existence, and how unworthy God's Universe is to have so distinguished a resident, could transport himself into the patched coat and sooty apron of a Sheffield Blacksmith, made with as strange faculties and feelings as he, made by God Almighty all one as he was,—it would throw a light on much for him.

Meanwhile, is it not frightful as well as mournful to consider how the wide-spread evil is spreading wider and wider? Most persons, who have had eyes to look with, may have verified, in their own circle, the statement of this Sheffield Eye-witness, and 'from their own knowledge and observation fearlessly declare that 'the little master-manufacturer, that the working man generally, 'is in a much worse condition than he was twenty-five years ago.' Unhappily, the fact is too plain; the reason and scientific necessity of it is too plain. In this mad state of things, every new man is a new misfortune; every new market a new complexity; the chapter of chances grows ever more incalculable; the hungry gamesters (whose stake is their life) are ever increasing in numbers; the world-movement rolls on: by what method shall the weak and help-needing, who has none to help him, withstand it? Alas, how many brave hearts, ground to pieces in that unequal battle, have already sunk; in every sinking heart, a Tragedy, less famous than that of the Sons of Atreus; wherein, however, if no 'kingly house,' yet a manly house went to the dust, and a whole manly lineage was swept away! Must it grow worse and worse, till the last brave heart is broken in England; and this same 'brave Peasantry' has become a kennel of wild-howling ravenous Paupers? God be thanked! there is some feeble shadow of hope that the change may have begun while it was yet time. You may lift the pressure from the free man's shoulders, and bid him go forth rejoicing; but lift the slave's burden, he will only wallow the more composedly in his sloth: a nation of degraded men cannot be raised up, except by what we rightly name a miracle.

Under which point of view also, these little Volumes, indicating such a character in such a place, are not without significance. One faint symptom, perhaps, that clearness will return, that there is a possibility of its return. It is as if from that Gehenna of Manufacturing Radicalism, from amid its loud roaring and cursing, whereby nothing became feasible, nothing knowable, except this only, that misery and malady existed there, we heard now some manful tone of reason and determination, wherein alone can there be profit, or

promise of deliverance. In this Corn-Law Rhymer we seem to trace something of the antique spirit; a spirit which had long become invisible among our working as among other classes; which here, perhaps almost for the first time, reveals itself in an altogether modern political vesture. 'The Pariahs of the Isle of Woe,' as he passionately names them, are no longer Pariahs if they have become Men. Here is one man of their tribe; in several respects a true man; who has abjured Hypocrisy and Servility, yet not therewith trodden Religion and Loyalty under foot; not without justness of insight, devoutness, peaceable heroism of resolve; who, in all circumstances, even in these strange ones, will be found quitting himself like a man. One such that has found a voice: who knows how many mute but not inactive brethren he may have, in his own and in all other ranks? Seven thousand that have not bowed the knee to Baal! These are the men, wheresoever found, who are to stand forth in England's evil day, on whom the hope of England rests.

For it has been often said, and must often be said again, that all Reform except a moral one will prove unavailing. Political Reform, pressingly enough wanted, can indeed root-out the weeds (gross deep-fixed lazy dock-weeds, poisonous obscene hemlocks, ineffectual spurry in abundance); but it leaves the ground *empty*, —ready either for noble fruits, or for new worse tares! And how else is a Moral Reform to be looked for but in this way, that more and more Good Men are, by a bountiful Providence, sent hither to disseminate Goodness; literally to *sow* it, as in seeds shaken abroad by the living tree? For such, in all ages and places, is the nature of a Good Man; he is ever a mystic creative centre of Goodness: his influence, if we consider it, is not to be measured; for his works do not die, but being of Eternity, are eternal; and in new transformation, and ever-wider diffusion, endure, living and life-giving. Thou who exclaimest over the horrors and baseness of the Time, and how Diogenes would now need *two* lanterns in daylight, think of this: over the Time thou hast no power; to redeem a World sunk in dishonesty hast not been given thee: solely over one man therein thou hast a quite absolute uncontrollable power; him redeem, him make honest; it will be something, it will be much, and thy life and labour not in vain.

We have given no epitomised abstract of these little Books, such as is the Reviewer's wont: we would gladly persuade many a reader, high and low, who takes interest not in rhyme only, but in

reason, and the condition of his fellow-man, to purchase peruse them for himself. It is proof of an innate love of and how willingly the Public, did not thousand-voiced Puff confuse it, would have to do with substances, and not wit ceptive shadows, that these Volumes carry 'Third Edition' m on them,—on all of them but the newest, whose fate wit reading world we yet know not; which, however, seems to d not worse but better than either of its forerunners.

Nay, it appears to us as if in this humble Chant of the *Patriarch* might be traced rudiments of a truly great idea; though all undeveloped. The Rhapsody of 'Enoch Wray' its nature and unconscious tendency, Epic; a whole worl shadowed in it. What we might call an inarticulate, half-a Epic! The main figure is a blind aged man; himself a rui encircled with the ruin of a whole Era. Sad and great doe image of a universal Dissolution hover visible as a poetic ground. Good old Enoch! He could *do* so much; was so w valiant. No Ilion had he destroyed; yet somewhat he had up: where the Mill stands noisy by its cataract, making cor bread for men, it was Enoch that reared it, and made the rocks send it water; where the mountain Torrent now b vain, and is mere passing music to the traveller, it was E cunning that spanned it with that strong Arch, grim, time-de Where Enoch's hand or mind has been, Disorder has b Order; Chaos has receded some little handbreadth had to gi some new handbreadth of his ancient realm. Enoch too ha his followers fall round him (by stress of hardship, and the a of the gods), has performed funeral games for them, and sandstone memorials, and carved his *Abiit ad Plures* thereon his own hand. The living chronicle and epitome of a century; when he departs, a whole century will become historical.

Rudiments of an Epic, we say; and of the true Epic o Time,—were the genius but arrived that could sing it! 'Arms and the Man;' 'Tools and the Man,' that were no Epic. What indeed are Tools, from the Hammer and Plum Enoch Wray to this Pen we now write with, but Arms, whe to do battle against UNREASON without or within, and sm pieces not miserable fellow-men, but the Arch-Enemy that us all miserable; henceforth the only legitimate battle!

Which Epic, as we granted, is here altogether imperfectly

scarcely a few notes thereof brought freely out: nevertheless with indication, with prediction that it will be sung. Such is the purport and merit of the *Village Patriarch;* it struggles towards a noble utterance, which however it can nowise find. Old Enoch is from the first speechless, heard of rather than heard or seen; at best, mute, motionless like a stone pillar of his own carving. Indeed, to find fit utterance for such meaning as lies struggling here, is a problem, to which the highest poetic minds may long be content to accomplish only approximate solutions. Meanwhile, our honest Rhymer, with no guide but the instinct of a clear natural talent, has created and adjusted somewhat, not without vitality of union; has avoided somewhat, the road to which lay open enough. His *Village Patriarch*, for example, though of an elegiac strain, is not wholly lachrymose, not without touches of rugged gaiety;—is like Life itself, with tears and toil, with laughter and rude play, such as metallurgic Yorkshire sees it: in which sense, that wondrous Courtship of the sharp-tempered, oft-widowed Alice Green may pass, questionable, yet with a certain air of soot-stained genuineness. And so has, not a Picture, indeed, yet a sort of genial Study or Cartoon come together for him: and may endure there, after some fiery oil-daubings, which we have seen framed with gilding, and hung-up in proud galleries, have become rags and rubbish.

To one class of readers especially, such Books as these ought to be interesting: to the highest, that is to say, the richest class. Among our Aristocracy, there are men, we trust there are many men, who feel that they also are workmen, born to toil, ever in their great Taskmaster's eye, faithfully with heart and head for those that with heart and hand do, under the same great Taskmaster, toil for them;—who have even this noblest and hardest work set before them: To deliver out of that Egyptian bondage to Wretchedness, and Ignorance, and Sin, the hardhanded millions; of whom this hardhanded earnest witness and writer is here representative. To such men his writing will be as a Document, which they will lovingly interpret: what is dark and exasperated and acrid, in their humble Brother, they for themselves will enlighten and sweeten; taking thankfully what is the real purport of his message, and laying it earnestly to heart. Might an instructive relation and interchange between High and Low at length ground itself, and more and more perfect itself,—to the unspeakable profit of all parties; for if all parties are to love and help one another, the first step towards this is, that all thoroughly understand one another!

To such rich men an authentic message from the hearts of poor men, from the heart of one poor man, will be welcome.

To another class of our Aristocracy, again, who unhappily feel rather that they are *not* workmen; and profess not so much to bear any burden, as to be themselves, with utmost attainable *steadiness*, and if possible *gracefulness*, borne,—such a phenomenon as this of the Sheffield Corn-Law Rhymer, with a Manchester Detrosier, and much else, pointing the same way, will be quite unwelcome; indeed, to the clearer-sighted, astonishing and alarming. It indicates that they find themselves, as Napoleon was wont to say, 'in a new position;'—a position wonderful enough; of extreme singularity, to which, in the whole course of History, there is perhaps but one case in some measure parallel. The case alluded to stands recorded in the *Book of Numbers:* the case of Balaam the son of Beor.

Truly, if we consider it, there are few passages more notable and pregnant in their way, than this of Balaam. The Midianitish Soothsayer (Truth-speaker, or as we should now say, Counsel-giver and Senator) is journeying forth, as he has from of old quite prosperously done, in the way of his vocation; not so much to 'curse the people of the Lord,' as to earn for himself a comfortable penny by such means as are possible and expedient; something, it is hoped, midway between cursing and blessing; which shall not, except in case of necessity, be either a curse or a blessing, or indeed be anything so much as a Nothing that will look like a Something and bring wages in. For the man is not dishonest; far from it: still less is he honest; but above all things, he is, has been and will be, respectable. Did calumny ever dare to fasten itself on the fair fame of Balaam? In his whole walk and conversation, has he not shown consistency enough; ever doing and speaking the thing that was decent; with proper spirit maintaining his status; so that friend and opponent held him in respect, and he could defy the spiteful world to say on any occasion, *Herein* art thou a knave? And now as he jogs along, in official comfort, with brave official retinue, his heart filled with good things, his head with schemes for the Preservation of Game, the Suppression of Vice, and the Cause of Civil and Religious Liberty all over the World;—consider what a spasm, and life-clutching ice-taloned pang, must have shot through the brain and pericardium of Balaam, when his Ass not only on the sudden stood stock-still, defying spur and cudgel, but—*began to talk*, and that in a reasonable manner!

Did not his face, elongating, collapse, and tremour occupy his joints? For the thin crust of Respectability has cracked asunder; and a bottomless preternatural Inane yawns under him instead. Farewell, a long farewell to all my greatness: the spirit-stirring Vote, ear-piercing Hear; the big Speech that makes ambition virtue; soft Palm-greasing first of raptures, and Cheers that emulate sphere-music: Balaam's occupation's gone!—

As for our stout Corn-Law Rhymer, what can we say by way of valediction but this, "Well done; come again, doing better"? Advices enough there were; but all lie included under one: To keep his eyes open, and do honestly whatsoever his hand shall find to do. We have praised him for sincerity: let him become more and more sincere; casting out all remnants of Hearsay, Imitation, ephemeral Speculation; resolutely '*clearing* his mind of Cant.' We advised a wider course of reading: would he forgive us if we now suggested the question, Whether Rhyme is the only dialect he can write in; whether Rhyme is, after all, the natural or fittest dialect for him? In good Prose, which differs inconceivably from bad Prose, what may not be written, what may not be read; from a Waverley Novel to an Arabic Koran, to an English Bible! Rhyme has plain advantages; which, however, are often purchased too dear. If the inward thought *can* speak itself, instead of sing itself, let it, especially in these quite unmusical days, do the former! In any case, if the inward Thought do not sing itself, that singing of the outward Phrase is a timber-toned false matter we could well dispense with. Will our Rhymer consider himself, then; and decide for what is actually best? Rhyme, up to this hour, never seems altogether obedient to him; and disobedient Rhyme,—who would ride on *it* that had once learned walking!

He takes amiss that some friends have admonished him to quit Politics: we will not repeat that admonition. Let him, on this as on all other matters, take solemn counsel with his own Socrates'-Demon; such as dwells in every mortal; such as he is a happy mortal who can hear the voice of, follow the behests of, like an unalterable law. At the same time, we could truly wish to see such a mind as his engaged rather in considering what, in his own sphere, could be *done*, than what, in his own or other spheres, ought to be *destroyed*; rather in producing or preserving the True, than in mangling and slashing asunder the False. Let him be at ease: the False is already dead, or lives only with a mock life. The death-sentence of the False was of old, from the first beginning

of it, written in Heaven; and is now proclaimed in the Earth, and read aloud at all market-crosses; nor are innumerable volunteer tipstaves and headsmen wanting, to execute the same: for which needful service men inferior to him may suffice. Why should the heart of the Corn-Law Rhymer be troubled? Spite of 'Bread-tax,' he and his brave children, who will emulate their sire, have yet bread: the Workhouse, as we rejoice to fancy, has receded into the safe distance; and is now quite shut-out from his poetic pleasure-ground. Why should he afflict himself with devices of 'Borough-mongering gowls,' or the rage of the Heathen imagining a vain thing? This matter, which he calls Corn-Law, will not have completed itself, adjusted itself into clearness, for the space of a century or two: nay after twenty centuries, what will there, or can there be for the son of Adam but Work, Work, two hands quite *full* of Work! Meanwhile, is not the Corn-Law Rhymer already a king, though a belligerent one; king of his own mind and faculty; and what man in the long-run is king of more? Not one in the thousand, even among sceptred kings, is king of so much. Be diligent in business, then; fervent in spirit. Above all things, lay aside anger, uncharitableness, hatred, noisy tumult; avoid them, as worse than Pestilence, worse than 'Bread-tax' itself:

> For it well beseemeth kings, all mortals it beseemeth well,
> To possess their souls in patience, and await what can betide.

ON HISTORY AGAIN.

ON HISTORY AGAIN.[1]

[1833.]

[The following singular Fragment on *History* forms part, as may be recognised, of the Inaugural Discourse delivered by our assiduous 'D. T.' at the opening of the *Society for the Diffusion of Common Honesty*. The Discourse, if one may credit the Morning Papers, 'touched in the most wonderful 'manner, didactically, poetically, almost prophetically, on all things in this 'world and the next, in a strain of sustained or rather of suppressed 'passionate eloquence rarely witnessed in Parliament or out of it: the 'chief bursts were received with profound silence,'—interrupted, we fear, by snuff-taking. As will be seen, it is one of the didactic passages that we introduce here. The Editor of this Magazine is responsible for its accuracy, and publishes, if not with leave given, then with leave taken.—O. Y.]

* * * HISTORY recommends itself as the most profitable of all studies: and truly, for such a being as Man, who is born, and has to learn and work, and then after a measured term of years to depart, leaving descendants and performances, and so, in all ways, to vindicate himself as vital portion of a Mankind, no study could be fitter. History is the Letter of Instructions, which the old generations write and posthumously transmit to the new; nay it may be called, more generally still, the Message, verbal or written, which all Mankind delivers to every man; it is the only *articulate* communication (when the inarticulate and mute, intelligible or not, lie round us and in us, so strangely through every fibre of our being, every step of our activity) which the Past can have with the Present, the Distant with what is Here. All Books, therefore, were they but Song-books or treatises on Mathematics, are in the long-run historical documents—as indeed all Speech itself is: thus might we say, History is not only the fittest study, but the only study, and includes all others whatsoever. The Perfect in History,

[1] FRASER'S MAGAZINE, No. 41.

he who understood, and saw and knew within himself, *all* that the whole Family of Adam had hitherto *been* and hitherto *done*, were perfect in all learning extant or possible; needed not thenceforth to *study* any more; had thenceforth nothing left but to *be* and to *do* something himself, that others might make History of it, and learn of *him*.

Perfection in any kind is well known not to be the lot of man: but of all supernatural perfect-characters this of the Perfect in History (so easily conceivable, too) were perhaps the most miraculous. Clearly a faultless monster which the world is not to see, not even on paper. Had the Wandering Jew, indeed, begun to wander at Eden, and with a Fortunatus's Hat on his head! Nanac Shah too, we remember, steeped himself three days in some sacred Well; and there learnt all things: Nanac's was a far easier method; but unhappily not practicable—in this climate. Consider, however, at what immeasurable distance from this perfect Nanac your highest imperfect Gibbons play their part! Were there no brave men, thinkest thou, before Agamemnon? Beyond the Thracian Bosphorus, was all dead and void; from Cape Horn to Nova Zembla, round the whole habitable Globe, not a mouse stirring? Or, again, in reference to Time:—the Creation of the World is indeed old, compare it to the Year One; yet young, of yesterday, compare it to Eternity! Alas, all Universal History is but a sort of Parish History; which the 'P. P. Clerk of this Parish,' member of 'our Ale-house Club' (instituted for what 'Psalmody' is in request there) puts together,—in such sort as his fellow-members will praise. Of the *thing* now gone silent, named Past, which was once Present, and loud enough, how much do we know? Our 'Letter of Instructions' comes to us in the saddest state; falsified, blotted out, torn, lost and but a shred of it in existence; this too so difficult to read or spell.

Unspeakably precious meanwhile is our shred of a Letter, is our written or spoken Message, such as we have it. Only he who understands what has been, can know what should be and will be. It is of the last importance that the individual have ascertained his relation to the whole; 'an individual helps not,' it has been written; 'only he who unites with many at the proper hour.' How easy, in a sense, for your all-instructed Nanac to work without waste or force (or what we call fault); and, in practice, act new History, as perfectly as, in theory, he knew the old! Comprehending what the given world was, what it had and what it wanted,

how might his clear effort strike-in at the right time and the right point; wholly increasing the true current and tendency, nowhere cancelling itself in opposition thereto! Unhappily, such smooth-running, ever-accelerated course is nowise the one appointed us; cross-currents we have, perplexed back-floods; innumerable efforts (every new man is a new effort) consume themselves in aimless eddies: thus is the River of Existence so wild-flowing, wasteful; and whole multitudes, and whole generations, in painful unreason, spend and are spent on what can never profit. Of all which, does not one-half originate in this which we have named want of Perfection in History;—the other half, indeed, in another want still deeper, still more irremediable?

Here, however, let us grant that Nature, in regard to such historic want, is nowise blamable: taking up the other face of the matter, let us rather admire the pains she has been at, the truly magnificent provision she has made, that this same Message of Instructions might reach us in boundless plenitude. Endowments, faculties enough, we have: it is her wise will too that no faculty imparted to us shall rust from disuse; the miraculous faculty of Speech, once given, becomes not more a gift than a necessity; the Tongue, with or without much meaning, will keep in motion; and only in some La Trappe by unspeakable self-restraint forbear wagging. As little can the fingers that have learned the miracle of Writing lie idle; if there is a rage of speaking, we know also there is a rage of writing, perhaps the more furious of the two. It is said, 'so eager are men to speak, they will not let one another get to speech;' but, on the other hand, writing is usually transacted in private, and every man has his own desk and inkstand, and sits independent and unrestrainable there. Lastly, multiply this power of the Pen some ten-thousandfold: that is to say, invent the Printing-Press, with its Printer's Devils, with its Editors, Contributors, Booksellers, Billstickers, and see what it will do! Such are the means wherewith Nature, and Art the daughter of Nature, have equipped their favourite Man, for publishing himself to man.

Consider, now, two things: first, that one Tongue, of average velocity, will publish at the rate of a thick octavo volume per day; and then how many nimble-enough Tongues may be supposed to be at work on this Planet Earth, in this City London, at this hour! Secondly, that a Literary Contributor, if in good heart and urged by hunger, will many times, as we are credibly informed, accom-

plish his two Magazine sheets within the four-and-twenty hours; such Contributors being now numerable not by the thousand, but by the million. Nay, taking History, in its narrower, vulgar sense, as the mere chronicle of 'occurrences,' of things that can be, as we say, 'narrated,' our calculation is still but a little altered. Simple Narrative, it will be observed, is the grand staple of Speech; 'the common man,' says Jean Paul, 'is copious in Narrative, exiguous 'in Reflection; only with the cultivated man is it otherwise, re-'versewise.' Allow even the thousandth part of human publishing for the emission of Thought, though perhaps the millionth were enough, we have still the nine hundred and ninety-nine employed in History proper, in relating occurrences, or conjecturing probabilities of such; that is to say, either in History or Prophecy, which is a new form of History:—and so the reader can judge with what abundance this life-breath of the human intellect is furnished in our world; whether Nature has been stingy to him or munificent. Courage, reader! Never can the historical inquirer want pabulum, better or worse: are there not forty-eight longitudinal feet of small-printed History in thy Daily Newspaper?

The truth is, if Universal History is such a miserable defective 'shred' as we have named it, the fault lies not in our historic organs, but wholly in our misuse of these; say rather, in so many wants and obstructions, varying with the various age, that pervert our right use of them; especially two wants that press heavily in all ages: want of Honesty, want of Understanding. If the thing published is not true, is only a supposition, or even a wilful invention, what can be done with it, except abolish it and annihilate it? But again, Truth, says Horne Tooke, means simply the thing *trowed*, the thing believed; and now, from this to the thing *itself*, what a new fatal deduction have we to suffer! Without Understanding, Belief itself will profit little: and how can your publishing avail, when there was no vision in it, but mere blindness? For as in political appointments, the man you appoint is not he who was ablest to discharge the duty, but only he who was ablest to be appointed; so too, in all historic elections and selections, the maddest work goes on. The event worthiest to be known is perhaps of all others the least spoken of: nay, some say, it lies in the very nature of such events to be so. Thus, in those same forty-eight longitudinal feet of History, or even when they have stretched out into forty-eight longitudinal miles, of the like quality, there may not be the forty-eighth part of a hairsbreadth that will turn to

ıything. Truly, in these times, the quantity of printed Publication ıat will need to be consumed with fire, before the smallest ɜrmanent advantage can be drawn from it, might fill us with ıtonishment, almost with apprehension. Where, alas, is the ıtrepid Herculean Dr. Wagtail, that will reduce all these paper-ıountains into tinder, and extract therefrom the three drops of inder-water Elixir?

For indeed, looking at the activity of the historic Pen and Press ırough this last half-century, and what bulk of History it yields ɜr that period alone, and how it is henceforth like to increase in ecimal or vigesimal geometric progression,—one might feel as if a ay were not distant, when perceiving that the whole Earth would ot now contain those writings of what was done in the Earth, the uman memory must needs sink confounded, and cease remember-ıg!—To some the reflection may be new and consolatory, that ıis state of ours is not so unexampled as it seems; that with ıemory and things memorable the case was always intrinsically .milar. The Life of Nero occupies some diamond pages of our 'acitus: but in the parchment and papyrus archives of Nero's gene-ıtion how many did it fill? The author of the *Vie de Sénèque*, at ıis distance, picking-up a few residuary snips, has with ease made wo octavos of it. On the other hand, were the contents of the ıen extant Roman memories, or, going to the utmost length, were ll that was then *spoken* on it, put in types, how many 'longi-ıdinal feet' of small-pica had we,—in belts that would go round ıe Globe!

History, then, before it can become Universal History, needs of ll things to be compressed. Were there no epitomising of History, ne could not remember beyond a week. Nay, go to that with it, nd exclude compression altogether, we could not remember an our, or at all: for Time, like Space, is *infinitely* divisible; and an our with its events, with its sensations and emotions, might be iffused to such expansion as should cover the whole field of ıemory, and push all else over the limits. Habit, however, and ıe natural constitution of man, do themselves prescribe service-ble rules for remembering; and keep at a safe distance from s all such fantastic possibilities;—into which only some foolish Iahomedan Caliph, ducking his head in a bucket of enchanted 'ater, and so beating-out one wet minute into seven long years of ɜrvitude and hardship, could fall. The rudest peasant has his ɔmplete set of Annual Registers legibly printed in his brain; and,

without the smallest training in Mnemonics, the proper pauses, subdivisions and subordinations of the little to the great, all introduced there. Memory and Oblivion, like Day and Night, and indeed like all other Contradictions in this strange dualistic Life of ours, are necessary for each other's existence: Oblivion is the dark page, whereon Memory writes her light-beam characters, and makes them legible; were it all light, nothing could be read there, any more than if it were all darkness.

As with man and these autobiographic Annual-Registers of his, so goes it with Mankind and its Universal History, which also is *its* Autobiography: a like unconscious talent of remembering and of forgetting again does the work here. The transactions of the day, were they never so noisy, cannot remain loud forever; the morrow comes with its new noises, claiming also to be registered: in the immeasurable conflict and concert of this chaos of existence, figure after figure sinks, as *all* that has emerged must one day sink: what cannot be kept in mind will even go out of mind; History contracts itself into readable extent; and at last, in the hands of some Bossuet or Müller, the whole printed History of the World, from the Creation downwards, has grown shorter than that of the Ward of Portsoken for one solar day.

Whether such contraction and epitome is always wisely formed, might admit of question; or rather, as we say, admits of no question. Scandalous Cleopatras and Messalinas, Caligulas and Commoduses, in unprofitable proportion, survive for memory; while a scientific Pancirollus has to write his Book of Arts Lost; and a moral Pancirollus, were the vision lent him, might write a still more mournful Book of Virtues Lost; of noble men, doing and daring and enduring, whose heroic life, as a new revelation and development of Life itself, were a possession for all, but is now lost and forgotten, History having otherwise filled her page. In fact, here as elsewhere, what we call Accident governs much; in any case, History must come together not as it should, but as it can and will.

Remark nevertheless how, by natural tendency alone, and as it were without man's forethought, a certain fitness of selection, and this even to a high degree, becomes inevitable. Wholly worthless the selection could not be, were there no better rule than this to guide it: that men permanently speak only of what is extant and actively alive beside them. Thus do the things that have produced fruit, nay whose fruit still grows, turn out to be the things

chosen for record and writing of; which things alone were great, and worth recording. The Battle of Châlons, where Hunland met Rome, and the Earth was played for, at sword-fence, by two earth-bestriding giants, the sweep of whose swords cut kingdoms in pieces, hovers dim in the languid remembrance of a few; while the poor police-court Treachery of a wretched Iscariot, transacted in the wretched land of Palestine, centuries earlier, for 'thirty pieces of silver,' lives clear in the heads, in the hearts of all men. Nay moreover, as only that which bore fruit was great; so of all things, that whose fruit is still here and growing must be the greatest, the best worth remembering; which again, as we see, by the very nature of the case, is mainly the thing remembered. Observe, too, how this 'mainly' tends always to become a 'solely,' and the approximate continually approaches nearer: for triviality after triviality, as it perishes from the living activity of men, drops away from their speech and memory, and the great and vital more and more exclusively survive there. Thus does Accident correct Accident; and in the wondrous boundless jostle of things (an aimful POWER presiding over it, say rather, dwelling *in* it), a result comes out that may be put-up with.

Curious, at all events, and worth looking at once in our life, is this same compressure of History, be the process thereof what it may. How the 'forty-eight longitudinal feet' have shrunk together after a century, after ten centuries! Look back from end to beginning, over any History; over our own *England*: how, in rapidest law of perspective, it dwindles from the canvas! An unhappy Sybarite, if we stand within two centuries of him and name him Charles Second, shall have twelve times the space of a heroic Alfred; two or three thousand times, if we name him George the Fourth. The whole Saxon Heptarchy, though events, to which Magna Charta, and the world-famous Third Reading, are as dust in the balance, took place then,—for did not England, to mention nothing else, get itself, if not represented in Parliament, yet converted to Christianity?—the whole Saxon Heptarchy, I say, is summed-up practically in that one sentence of Milton's, the only one succeeding writers have copied, or readers remembered, of the 'fighting and flocking of kites and crows.' Neither was that an unimportant wassail-night, when the two black-browed Brothers, strongheaded, headstrong, Hengst and Horsa (*Stallion* and *Horse*), determined on a man-hunt in Britain, the boar-hunt at home having got over-crowded; and so, of a few hungry Angles made an English

Nation, and planted it here, and—produced *thee*, O Reader! Of Hengst's whole campaignings scarcely half a page of good Narrative can now be written; the *Lord Mayor's Visit to Oxford* standing, meanwhile, revealed to mankind in a respectable volume. Nay what of this? Does not the Destruction of a Brunswick Theatre take above a million times as much telling as the Creation of a World?

To use a ready-made similitude, we might liken Universal History to a magic web; and consider with astonishment how, by philosophic insight and indolent neglect, the ever-growing fabric wove itself forward, out of that ravelled immeasurable mass of threads and thrums, which we name *Memoirs;* nay, at each new lengthening, at each new *epoch*, changed its whole proportions, its hue and structure to the very origin. Thus, do not the records of a Tacitus acquire new meaning, after seventeen hundred years, in the hands of a Montesquieu? Niebuhr has to reinterpret for us, at a still greater distance, the writings of a Titus Livius: nay, the religious archaic chronicles of a Hebrew Prophet and Lawgiver escape not the like fortune; and many a ponderous Eichhorn scans, with new-ground philosophic spectacles, the revelation of a Moses, and strives to reproduce for this century what, thirty centuries ago, was of plainly infinite significance to all. Consider History with the beginnings of it stretching dimly into the remote Time; emerging darkly out of the mysterious Eternity: the ends of it enveloping *us* at this hour, whereof we at this hour, both as actors and relators, form part! In shape we might mathematically name it *Hyperbolic-Asymptotic;* ever of *infinite* breadth around us; soon shrinking within narrow limits: ever narrowing more and more into the infinite depth behind us. In essence and significance it has been called 'the true Epic Poem, and universal Divine Scripture, whose '"plenary inspiration" no man, out of Bedlam or in it, shall bring 'in question.'

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DIDEROT.

DIDEROT.[1]

[1833.]

THE *Acts* of the *Christian Apostles*, on which, as we may say, the world has, now for eighteen centuries, had its foundation, are written in so small a compass, that they can be read in one little hour. The *Acts* of the *French Philosophes*, the importance of which is already fast exhausting itself, lie recorded in whole acres of typography, and would furnish reading for a lifetime. Nor is the stock, as we see, yet anywise complete, or within computable distance of completion. Here are Four quite new Octavos, recording the labours, voyages, victories, amours and indigestions of the Apostle Denis: it is but a year or two since a new contribution on Voltaire came before us; since Jean Jacques had a new *Life* written for him; and then of those *Feuilles de Grimm*, what incalculable masses may yet lie dormant in the Petersburg library, waiting only to be awakened and let slip!—Reading for a lifetime? Thomas Parr might begin reading in long-clothes, and stop in his last hundred and fiftieth year without having ended. And then, as to when the process of addition will cease, and the Acts and Epistles of the Parisian Church of Antichrist will have completed themselves; except in so far as the quantity of paper written on, or even manufactured, in those days, being finite and not infinite, the business one day or other must cease, and the Antichristian Canon close for the last time,—we yet know nothing.

Meanwhile, let us nowise be understood as lamenting this stupendous copiousness, but rather as viewing it historically with

[1] FOREIGN QUARTERLY REVIEW, No. 22.—1. *Mémoires, Correspondance et Ouvrages inédits de Diderot; publiés d'après les manuscrits confiés, en mourant, par l'auteur à Grimm.* 4 tom. 8vo. Paris (Paulin, Libraire-Editeur), 1831. 2. *Œuvres de Denis Diderot; précédées de Mémoires historiques et philosophiques sur sa Vie et ses Ouvrages, par J. A. Naigeon.* 22 tom. 8vo. Paris (Brière), 1821.

patience, and indeed with satisfaction. Memoirs, so long as they are true, how stupid soever, can hardly be accumulated in excess. The stupider they are, let them simply be the sooner cast into the oven; if true, they will always instruct more or less, were it only in the way of confirmation and repetition; and, what is of vast moment, they do not *mis*instruct. Day after day looking at the high destinies which yet await Literature, which Literature will ere long address herself with more decisiveness than ever to fulfil, it grows clearer to us that the proper task of Literature lies in the domain of BELIEF; within which 'Poetic Fiction,' as it is charitably named, will have to take a quite new figure, if allowed a settlement there. Whereby were it not reasonable to prophesy that this exceeding great multitude of Novel-writers and suchlike, must, in a new generation, gradually do one of two things: either retire into nurseries, and work for children, minors and semi-fatuous persons of both sexes; or else, what were far better, sweep their Novel-fabric into the dust-cart, and betake them with such faculty as they have to understand and record what is *true*,—of which, surely, there is, and will forever be, a whole Infinitude unknown to us, of infinite importance to us! Poetry, it will more and more come to be understood, is nothing but higher Knowledge; and the only genuine Romance (for grown persons) Reality. The Thinker is the Poet, the Seer: let him who *sees* write down according to his gift of sight; if deep and with inspired vision, then creatively, poetically; if common, and with only uninspired everyday vision, let him at least be faithful in this and write *Memoirs*.

On us still so near at hand, that Eighteenth Century in Paris presenting itself nowise as portion of the magic web of Universal History, but only as the confused and ravelled mass of threads and thrums, ycleped *Memoirs*, in process of *being* woven into such,—imposes a rather complex relation. Of which, however, as of all such, the leading rules may be happily comprised in this very plain one, prescribed by Nature herself: to search in them, so far as they seem worthy, for whatsoever can help us forward on our own path, were it in the shape of intellectual instruction, of moral edification, nay of mere solacement and amusement. The Bourbons, indeed, took a shorter method (the like of which has been often recommended elsewhere): they shut-up and hid the *graves* of the Philosophes, hoping that their lives and writings might likewise thereby go out of sight and out of mind; and thus the whole

business would be, so to speak, *suppressed*. Foolish Bourbons! These things were not done in a corner, but on high places, before the anxious eyes of all mankind: hidden they can in nowise be: to conquer them, to resist them, our first indispensable preliminary is to see and comprehend them. To us, indeed, as their immediate successors, the right comprehension of them is of prime necessity; for, sent of God or of the Devil, they have plainly enough gone before us, and left us such and such a world: it is on ground of their tillage, with the stubble of their harvest standing on it, that we now have to plough. Before all things, then, let us understand what ground it is; what manner of men and husbandmen these were. For which reason, be all authentic Philosophe-Memoirs welcome, each in its kind! For which reason, let us now, without the smallest reluctance, penetrate into this wondrous Gospel according to Denis Diderot, and expatiate there, to see whether it will yield us aught.

In any phenomenon, one of the most important moments is the *end*. Now this epoch of the Eighteenth or Philosophe-century was properly the End; the End of a Social System which for above a thousand years had been building itself together, and, after that, had begun, for some centuries (as human things all do), to moulder down. The mouldering-down of a Social System is no cheerful business either to form part of, or to look at: however, at length, in the course of it, there comes a time when the mouldering changes into a rushing; active hands drive-in their wedges, set-to their crowbars; there is a comfortable appearance of work going on. Instead of here and there a stone falling out, here and there a handful of dust, whole masses tumble down, whole clouds and whirlwinds of dust: torches too are applied, and the rotten easily takes fire: so, what with flame-whirlwind, what with dust-whirlwind, and the crash of falling towers, the concern grows eminently interesting; and our assiduous craftsmen can encourage one another with *Vivats*, and cries of *Speed the work*. Add to this, that of all labourers, no one can see such rapid extensive fruit of his labour as the Destroyer can and does: it will not seem unreasonable that measuring from effect to cause, he should esteem his labour as the best and greatest; and a Voltaire, for example, be by his guild-brethren and apprentices confidently accounted 'not only 'the greatest man of this age, but of all past ages, and perhaps the 'greatest that Nature could produce.' Worthy old Nature! She

goes on producing whatsoever is needful in each season of her course; and produces, with perfect composure, that Encyclopedist opinion, that she can produce no more.

Such a torch-and-crowbar period, of quick rushing-down and conflagration, was this of the *Siècle de Louis Quinze;* when the Social System having all fallen into rottenness, rain-holes and noisome decay, the shivering natives resolved to cheer their dull abode by the questionable step of setting it on fire. Questionable we call their manner of procedure; the thing itself, as all men may now see, was inevitable; one way or other, whether by prior burning or milder methods, the old house must needs be new-built. We behold the business of pulling down, or at least of assorting the rubbish, still go resolutely on, all over Europe: here and there some traces of new foundation, of new building-up, may now also, to the eye of Hope, disclose themselves.

To get acquainted with Denis Diderot and his life were to see the significant epitome of all this, as it works on the thinking and acting soul of a man, fashions for him a singular element of existence, gives himself therein a peculiar hue and figure. Unhappily, after all that has been written, the matter still is not luminous: to us strangers, much in that foreign economy, and method of working and living, remains obscure; much in the man himself, and his inward nature and structure. But indeed, it is several years since the present Reviewer gave up the idea of what could be called *understanding* any man whatever, even himself. Every Man, within that inconsiderable figure of his, contains a whole Spirit-kingdom and Reflex of the ALL; and, though to the eye but some six standard feet in size, reaches downwards and upwards, unsurveyable, fading into the regions of Immensity and of Eternity. Life everywhere, as woven on that stupendous ever-marvellous 'Loom of Time,' may be said to fashion itself of a woof of light, indeed, yet on a warp of mystic darkness: only He that created it can understand it. As to this Diderot, had we once got so far that we could, in the faintest degree, personate him; take upon ourselves his character and his environment of circumstances, and act his Life over again, in that small Private-Theatre of ours (under our own Hat), with moderate illusiveness and histrionic effect,—*that* were what, in conformity with common speech, we should name *understanding* him, and could be abundantly content with.

In his manner of appearance before the world, Diderot has been, perhaps to an extreme degree, unfortunate. His literary

productions were invariably dashed-off in hottest haste, and left generally on the waste of Accident, with an ostrich-like indifference. He had to live, in France, in the sour days of a *Journal de Trevoux;* of a suspicious, decaying Sorbonne. He was too poor to set foreign presses, at Kehl or elsewhere, in motion; too headlong and quick of temper to seek help from those that could: thus must he, if his pen was not to lie idle, write much of which there was no publishing. His Papers accordingly are found flying about, like Sibyl's leaves, in all corners of the world: for many years no tolerable Collection of his Writings was attempted; to this day there is none that in any sense can be called perfect. Two spurious, surreptitious Amsterdam Editions, 'or rather formless, blundering Agglomerations,' were all that the world saw during his life. Diderot did not hear of these for several years, and then only, it is said, 'with peals of laughter,' and no other practical step whatever. Of the four that have since been printed (or *re*printed, for Naigeon's, of 1798, is the great original), no one so much as pretends either to be complete, or selected on any system. Brière's, the latest, of which alone we have much personal knowledge, is a well-printed book, perhaps better worth buying than any of the others; yet without arrangement, without coherence, purport; often lamentably in need of commentary; on the whole, in reference to the wants and specialties of this time, as good as *un*edited. Brière seems, indeed, to have hired some person, or thing, to play the part of Editor; or rather more things than one, for they sign themselves Editors in the plural number; and from time to time, throughout the work, some asterisk attracts us to the bottom of the leaf, and to some printed matter subscribed 'EDIT^{s}.:' but unhappily the journey is for most part in vain; in the course of a volume or two, we learn too well that nothing is to be gained there; that the Note, whatever it professedly treat of, will, in strict logical speech, mean only as much as to say: 'Reader! thou perceivest that we 'Editors, to the number of at least two, are alive, and if we had any 'information would impart it to thee.—EDIT^{s}.' For the rest, these 'EDIT^{s}.' are polite people; and with this uncertainty (as to their being persons or things) clearly before them, continue, to all appearance, in moderately good spirits.

One service they, or Brière for them (if, indeed, Brière is not himself they, as we sometimes surmise), have accomplished for us: sought out and printed the long-looked-for, long-lost *Life of Diderot* by Naigeon. The lovers of biography had for years sorrowed over

this concealed Manuscript, with a wistfulness from which hope had nigh fled. A certain Naigeon, the beloved disciple of Diderot, had (if his own word, in his own editorial Preface, was to be credited) written a Life of him; and, alas! whither was it now vanished? Surely all that was dark in Denis the Fatalist had there been illuminated: nay, was there not, probably, a glorious 'Light-Street' carried through that whole Literary Eighteenth Century? And was not Diderot, long belauded as 'the most encyclopedical head that perhaps ever existed,' now to show himself as such, in—the new Practical Encyclopedia, philosophic, economic, speculative, digestive, of LIFE, in threescore and ten Years, or Volumes? Diderot too was known as the vividest, noblest talker of his time: considering all that Boswell, with his slender opportunities, had made of Johnson, what was there we had not a right to expect!

By Brière's endeavour, as we said, the concealed Manuscript of Naigeon now lies, as published Volume, on this desk. Alas, a written *life*, too like many an acted life, where hope is one thing, fulfilment quite another! Perhaps, indeed, of all biographies ever put together by the hand of man, this of Naigeon's is the most uninteresting. Foolish Naigeon! We wanted to see and know how it stood with the bodily man, the clothed, boarded, bedded, working and warfaring Denis Diderot, in that Paris of his; how he looked and lived, what he did, what he said: had the foolish Biographer so much as told us what colour his stockings were! Of all this, beyond a date or two, not a syllable, not a hint; nothing but a dull, sulky, snuffling, droning, interminable lecture on Atheistic Philosophy; how Diderot came upon Atheism, how he taught it, how true it is, how inexpressibly important. Singular enough, the zeal of *the devil's* house had eaten Naigeon up. A man of coarse, mechanical, perhaps intrinsically rather feeble intellect; and then, with the vehemence of some pulpit-drumming 'Gowkthrapple,' or 'precious Mr. Jabesh Rentowel,'—only that *his* kirk is of the *other* complexion! Yet must he too see himself in a wholly backsliding world, where much theism and other scandal still rules; and many times Gowkthrapple Naigeon be tempted to weep by the streams of Babel. Withal, however, he is *wooden;* thoroughly mechanical, as if Vaucanson himself had made him; and that singularly tempers his fury. Let the reader, finally, admire the bounteous produce of this Earth, and how one element bears nothing but the other matches it: here have we not the truest *odium theologicum*, working quite *demonologically*, in a worshipper of the Everlasting Nothing!

So much for Naigeon; what we looked for from him, and what we have got.

Must Diderot, then, be given up to oblivion, or remembered not as Man, but merely as Philosophic-Atheistic Logic-Mill? Did not Diderot live, as well as think? An Amateur reporter in some of the Biographical Dictionaries declares that he heard him talk one day, in nightgown and slippers, for the space of two hours, concerning earth, sea and air, with a fulgorous impetuosity almost beyond human, rising from height to height, and at length finish the climax by 'dashing his nightcap against the wall.' Most readers will admit this to be biography: we, alas, must say, it comprises nearly all about the Man Diderot that hitherto would abide with us.

Here, however, comes 'Paulin, Publishing-Bookseller,' with a quite new contribution: a long series of Letters, extending over fifteen years; unhappily only love-letters, and from a married sexagenarian; yet still letters from his own hand. Amid these insipid floods of *tendresse, sensibilité* and so forth, vapid, like long-decanted small-beer, many a curious biographic trait comes to light; indeed, we can hereby see more of the individual Diderot, and his environment, and method of procedure there, than by all the other books that have yet been published of him. Forgetting or conquering the species of nausea that such a business, on the first announcement of it, may occasion, and in many of the details of it cannot but confirm, the biographic reader will find this well worth looking into. Nay, is it not something, of itself, to see that Spectacle of the Philosophe in Love, or at least zealously endeavouring to fancy himself so? For scientific purposes a considerable tedium, of 'noble sentiment,' and even worse things, can be undergone. How the most encyclopedical head that perhaps ever existed, now on the borders of his grand climacteric, and already provided with wife and child, comports himself in that trying circumstance of preternuptial (and indeed, at such age, and with so many 'indigestions,' almost preternatural) devotion to the queens of this earth, may, by the curious in science, who have nerves for it, be here seen. There is besides a lively *Memoir* of him by Mademoiselle Diderot, though too brief, and not very true-looking. Finally, in one large Volume, his *Dream of d'Alembert*, greatly regretted and commented upon by Naigeon; which we could have done without. For its bulk, that little *Memoir* by Mademoiselle is the best of the whole. Unfortunately, indeed, as hinted, Mademoiselle, resolute of all things to be *piquante*, writes, or rather *thinks*, in a smart, antithetic

manner, nowise the fittest for clearness or credibility: without suspicion of voluntary falsehood, there is no appearance that this is a cameralucida picture, or a portrait drawn by legitimate rules of art. Such resolution to be piquant is the besetting sin of innumerable persons of both sexes, and wofully mars any use there might otherwise be in their writing or their speaking. It is, or was, the fault specially imputed to the French: in a woman and Frenchwoman, who besides has much to tell us, it must even be borne with. And now, from these diverse scattered materials, let us try how coherent a figure of Denis Diderot, and his earthly Pilgrimage and Performance, we can piece together.

In the ancient Town of Langres, in the month of October 1713, it begins. Fancy Langres, aloft on its hill-top, amid Roman ruins, nigh the sources of the Saone and of the Marne, with its coarse substantial houses, and fifteen thousand inhabitants, mostly engaged in knife-grinding; and one of the quickest, clearest, most volatile and susceptive little figures of that century, just landed in the World there. In this French Sheffield, Diderot's Father was a Cutler, master of his craft; a much-respected and respect-worthy man; one of those ancient craftsmen (now, alas! nearly departed from the earth, and sought, with little effect, by idylists, among the 'Scottish peasantry' and elsewhere) who, in the school of practice, have learned not only skill of hand, but the far harder skill of head and of heart; whose whole knowledge and virtue, being by necessity a knowledge and virtue to *do* somewhat, is true, and has stood trial: humble modern patriarchs, brave, wise, simple; of worth rude but unperverted, like genuine unwrought silver, native from the mine! Diderot loved his father, as he well might, and regrets on several occasions that he was painted in holiday clothes, and not in the workday costume of his trade, 'with apron and grinder's-wheel, and spectacles pushed up,'—even as he lived and laboured, and honestly made good for himself the small section of the Universe he pretended to occupy. A man of strictest veracity and integrity was this ancient master; of great insight and patient discretion, so that he was often chosen as umpire and adviser; of great humanity, so that one day crowds of poor were to 'follow him with tears to his long home.' An outspoken Langres neighbour gratified the now fatherless Philosopher with this saying: 'Ah, Monsieur Diderot, you are a famous man, but you will never be your father's equal.' Truly, of all the wonderful illustrious persons that come to view in

the biographic part of these six-and-twenty Volumes, it is a question whether this old Langres Cutler is not the worthiest; to us no other suggests himself whose worth can be admitted, without lamentable pollutions and defacements to be deducted from it. The Mother also was a loving-hearted, just woman: so Diderot might account himself well-born; and it is a credit to the man that he always, were it in the circle of kings and empresses, gratefully did so.

The Jesuits were his schoolmasters: at the age of twelve the encyclopedical head was 'tonsured.' He was quick in seizing, strong in remembering and arranging; otherwise flighty enough; fond of sport, and from time to time getting into trouble. One grand event, significant of all this, he has himself commemorated; his Daughter records it in these terms:

'He had chanced to have a quarrel with his comrades: it had been serious enough to bring on him a sentence of exclusion from college on some day of public examination and distribution of prizes. The idea of passing this important time at home, and grieving his parents, was intolerable; he proceeded to the college-gate; the porter refused him admittance; he presses-in while some crowd is entering, and sets off running at full speed; the porter gets at him with a sort of pike he carried, and wounds him in the side: the boy will not be driven back; arrives, takes the place that belonged to him: prizes of all sorts, for composition, for memory, for poetry, he obtains them all. No doubt he had deserved them; since even the resolution to punish him could not withstand the sense of justice in his superiors. Several volumes, a number of garlands had fallen to his lot; being too weak to carry them all, he put the garlands round his neck, and with his arms full of books, returned home. His mother was at the door; and saw him coming through the public square in this equipment, and surrounded by his schoolfellows: one should be a mother to conceive what she must have felt. He was feasted, he was caressed: but next Sunday, in dressing him for church, a considerable wound was found on him, of which he had not so much as thought of complaining.'

'One of the sweetest moments of my life,' writes Diderot himself of this same business, with a slight variation, 'was more than thirty years ago, and I remember it like yesterday, when my Father saw me coming home from the college, with my arms full of prizes that I had carried off, and my shoulders with the garlands they had given me, which, being too big for my brow, had let my head slip through them. Noticing me at a distance, he threw down his work, hastened to the door to meet me, and could not help weeping. It is a fine sight, a true man and rigorous falling to weep!'

Mademoiselle, in her quick-sparkling way, informs us, nevertheless, that the school-victor, getting tired of pedagogic admonitions and inflictions, whereof there were many, said 'one morning' to his father, 'that he meant to give up school'!—"Thou hadst rather be a cutler, then?"—"With all my heart."—They handed him an apron, and he placed himself beside his father. He spoiled whatever he laid hands on, penknives, whittles, blades of all kinds. It went on for four or five days; at the end of which he rose, proceeded to his room, got his books there, and returned to college,—and having, it would appear, in this simple manner sown his college wild-oats, never stirred from it again.

To the Reverend Fathers, it seemed that Denis would make an excellent Jesuit; wherefore they set about coaxing and courting, with intent to crimp him. Here, in some minds, a certain comfortable reflection on the diabolic cunning and assiduity of these Holy Fathers, now happily all dissolved and expelled, will suggest itself. Along with which, may another melancholy reflection no less be in place: namely, that these Devil-serving Jesuits should have shown a skill and zeal in their teaching vocation, such as no Heaven-serving body, of what complexion soever, anywhere on our earth now exhibits. To decipher the talent of a young vague Capability, who must one day be a man and a Reality; to take him by the hand, and train him to a spiritual trade, and set him up in it, with tools, shop and good-will, were doing him in most cases an unspeakable service,—on this one proviso, it is true, that the trade be a just and honest one; in which proviso surely there should lie no hindrance to such service, but rather a help. Nay, could many a poor Dermody, Hazlitt, Heron, Derrick and suchlike, have been trained to be a good Jesuit, were it greatly worse than to have lived painfully as a bad Nothing-at-all? But indeed, as was said, the Jesuits are dissolved; and Corporations of all sorts have perished (from corpulence); and now, instead of the seven corporate selfish spirits, we have the four-and-twenty millions of discorporate selfish; and the rule, *Man, mind thyself*, makes a jumble and a scramble, and crushing press (with dead-pressed figures and dismembered limbs enough); into whose dark chaotic depths (for human Life is ever unfathomable) one shudders to look. Loneliest of all, weakest and worst-bested, in that world-scramble, is the extraordinary figure known in these times as Man of Letters! It appears to be indubitable that this state of matters will alter and improve itself,—in a century or two. But to return:

'The Jesuits,' thus sparkles Mademoiselle, 'employed the temptation, which is always so seductive, of travelling and of liberty; they persuaded the youth to quit his home, and set forth with a Jesuit, to whom he was attached. Denis had a friend, a cousin of his own age; he intrusted his secret to him, wishing that he should accompany them. But the cousin, a tamer and discreeter personage, discovered the whole project to the father; the day of departure, the hour, all was betrayed. My grandfather kept the strictest silence; but before going to sleep he carried off the keys of the street-door; and at midnight, hearing his son descend, he presented himself before him, with the question, "Whither bound, at such an hour?" "To Paris," replied the young man, "where I am to join the Jesuits."— "That will not be tonight; but your desires shall be fulfilled: let us in the first place go to sleep."

'Next morning his father engaged two places in the public conveyance, and carried him to Paris, to the College d'Harcourt. He settled the terms of his little establishment, and bade his son good-b'ye. But the worthy man loved his child too well to leave him without being quite satisfied about his situation: he had the constancy to stay a fortnight longer, killing the time, and dying of tedium, in an inn, without seeing the sole object he was delaying for. At the end, he proceeded to the College; and my father has often told me that this proof of tenderness would have made him go to the end of the world, if the old man had required it. "Friend," said he, "I am come to know if your health keeps good; if you are content with your superiors, with your diet, with others and with yourself. If you are not well, if you are not happy, we will go back again to your mother. If you like better to remain here, I have but to speak a word with you, to embrace you, and give you my blessing." The youth assured him that he was perfectly content, that he liked his new abode very much. My grandfather then took leave of him, and went to the Principal, to know if he was satisfied with his pupil.'

On which side also the answer proving favourable, the worthy father returned home. Denis saw little more of him; never again residing under his roof; though for many years, and to the last, a proper intercourse was kept up; not, as appears, without a visit or two on the son's part, and certainly with the most unwearied, prudent superintendence and assistance on the father's. Indeed, it was a worthy family, that of the Diderots; and a fair degree of natural affection must be numbered among the virtues of our Philosophe. Those scenes about rural Langres, and the old homely way of life there, as delineated fictitiously in the *Entretien d'un Père avec ses Enfans*, and now more fully, as matter of fact, in this just-published *Correspondance*, are of a most innocent, cheerful, peacefully-secluded

character; more pleasing, we might almost say more poetical, than could elsewhere be gathered out of Diderot's whole Writings. Denis was the eldest of the family, and much looked up to, with all his shortcomings: there was a Brother, who became a clergyman; and a true-hearted, sharp-witted Sister, who remained unmarried, and at times tried to live in partnership with this latter,—rather unsuccessfully. The Clergyman being a conscientious, even strait-laced man, and Denis such as we know, they had, naturally enough, their own difficulties to keep on brotherly terms; and indeed, at length abandoned the task as hopeless. The Abbé stood rigorous by his Breviary, from time to time addressing solemn monitions to the lost Philosophe, who also went on his way. He is somewhat snarled at by the Denisian side of the house for this; but surely without ground: it was his virtue rather; at lowest his destiny. The true Priest, who could, or should, look peaceably on an *Encyclopédie*, is yet perhaps waited for in the world; and of all false things, is not a false Priest the falsest?

Meanwhile Denis, at the College d'Harcourt, learns additional Greek and Mathematics, and quite loses taste for the Jesuit career. Mad pranks enough he played, we doubt not; followed by reprimands. He made several friends, however; got intimate with the Abbé Bernis, Poet at that time, afterwards Cardinal. 'They used 'to dine together, for six sous a-piece, at the neighbouring '*Traiteur's*; and I have often heard him vaunt the gaiety of these 'repasts.'

'His studies being finished,' continues Mademoiselle, 'his father wrote to M. Clement de Ris, a Procureur at Paris, and his countryman, to take him as boarder, that he might study Jurisprudence and the Laws. He continued here two years; but the business of *actes* and *inventaires* had few charms for him. All the time he could steal from the office-desk was employed in prosecuting Latin and Greek, in which he thought himself still imperfect; Mathematics, which he to the last continued passionately fond of; Italian, English, &c. In the end he gave himself up so completely to his taste for letters, that M. Clement thought it right to inform his father how ill the youth was employing his time. My grandfather then expressly commissioned M. Clement to urge and constrain him to make choice of some profession, and, once for all, to become Doctor, Procureur, or Advocate. My father begged time to think of it; time was given. At the end of several months these proposals were again laid before him: he answered, that the profession of Doctor did not please him, for he could not think of killing anybody; that the

reur business was too difficult to execute with delicacy; that he
. willingly choose the profession of Advocate, were it not that he
n invincible repugnance to occupy himself all his life with other
's business. "But," said M. Clement, "what *will* you be, then?"
'n my word, nothing, nothing whatever (*Ma foi, rien, mais rien du*
I love study; I am very happy, very content, and want nothing
,

ire clearly is a youth of spirit, determined to take the world
ie broadside, and eat thereof and be filled. His decided turn,
that of so many others, is for the trade of sovereign prince, in
ihape or other; unhappily, however, the capital and outfit to
; up is wanting. Under which circumstances, nothing remains
o instruct M. Clement de Ris that no board-wages will hence-
be paid, and the young sovereign may, at his earliest con-
ence, be turned out of doors.

hat Denis, perched aloft in his own hired attic, may have
ght of it now, does not appear. The good old Father, in
ing his allowance, had reasonably enough insisted on one of
things: either that he should betake him to some intelligible
iod of existence, wherein all help should be furnished him;
se return home within the week. Neither of which could
s think of doing. A similar demand continued to be reiterated
ie next ten years, but always with the like non-effect. King
s, in his furnished attic, with or without money to pay for it,
now living and reigning, like other kings, 'by the grace of
;' and could nowise resolve to abdicate. A sanguineous,
ment, volatile mortal; young, and in so wide an earth, it
ed to him next to impossible but he must find gold-mines
. He lived, while victual was to be got, taking no thought
he morrow. He had books, he had merry company, a whole
g and dancing Paris round him; he could teach Mathematics,
uld turn himself so many ways; nay, might not he become
thematician one day; a glorified Savant, and strike the stars
his sublime head! Meanwhile he is like to be overtaken by
f the sharpest of human calamities, 'cleanness of teeth.'

ne Shrove Tuesday morning, he rises, gropes in his pocket; he nas
herewith to dine; will not trouble his friends who have not invited
This day, which in childhood he had so often passed in the middle
ations who adored him, becomes sadder by remembrance: he cannot
; he hopes to dissipate his melancholy by a walk; goes to the
ides, to the Courts, to the Bibliothèque du Roi, to the Jardin des

Plantes. You may drive away tedium; but you cannot give hunger the slip. He returns to his quarters; on entering he feels unwell; the landlady gives him a little toast and wine; he goes to bed. "That day," he has often said to me, "I swore that, if ever I came to have anything, I would never in my life refuse a poor man help, never condemn my fellow-creature to a day as painful."'

That Diderot, during all this period, escaped starvation, is plain enough by the result: but how he specially accomplished that, and the other business of living, remains mostly left to conjecture. Mademoiselle, confined at any rate within narrow limits, continues as usual too intent on sparkling: is *brillante* and *pétillante*, rather than lucent and illuminating. How inferior, for *seeing* with, is your brightest train of fireworks to the humblest farthing candle! Who Diderot's companions, friends, enemies, patrons were, what his way of life was, what the Paris he lived in and from his garret looked down on was, we learn only in hints, dislocated, enigmatic. It is in general to be impressed on us, that young Denis, as a sort of spiritual swash-buckler, who went about conquering Destiny, in light rapier-fence, by way of amusement; or at lowest, in reverses, gracefully insulting her with mock reverences, —lived and acted like no other man; all which being freely admitted, we ask, with small increase of knowledge, How did he act, then?

He gave lessons in Mathematics, we find; but with the princeliest indifference as to payment: 'was his scholar lively, and 'prompt of conception, he sat by him teaching all day; did he 'chance on a blockhead, he returned not back. They paid him in 'books, in movables, in linen, in money, or not at all; it was quite 'the same.' Farther, he made Sermons to order; as the Devil is said to quote Scripture: a Missionary bespoke half-a-dozen of him (of Denis, that is) for the Portuguese Colonies, and paid for them very handsomely at fifty crowns each. Once a family Tutorship came in his way, with tolerable appointments, but likewise with incessant duties: at the end of three months, he waits upon the house-father with this abrupt communication: "I am come, Monsieur, to request you to seek a new tutor; I cannot remain with you any longer."—"But, Monsieur Diderot, what is your grievance? Have you too little salary? I will double it. Are you ill-lodged? Choose your apartment. Is your table ill-served? Order your own dinner. All will be cheap to parting with you."—"Monsieur, look at me: a citron is not so yellow as my face. I

making men of your children; but every day I am becoming hild with them. I feel a hundred times too rich and too well in your house; yet I must leave it: the object of my wishes is , to live better, but to keep from dying."

Mademoiselle grants that, if sometimes 'drunk with gaiety,' he s often enough plunged in bitterness; but then a Newtonian blem, a fine thought, or any small godsend of that sort, uld instantly cheer him again. The 'gold-mines' had not yet ne to light. Meanwhile, between him and starvation we can l discern Langres covertly stretching out its hand. Of any ngres man, coming in his way, Denis frankly borrows; and the d old Father refuses not to pay. The Mother is still kinder, least softer: she sends him direct help, as she can; not by the t, but by a serving-maid, who travelled these sixty leagues on t; delivered him a small sum from his mother; and, without ntioning it, added all her own savings thereto. This Samaritan rney she performed three times. 'I saw her some years ago,' s Mademoiselle; 'she spoke of my father with tears; her whole sire was to see him again: sixty years' service had impaired ither her sense nor her sensibility.'

t is granted also that his company was 'sometimes good, some- es indifferent, not to say bad.' Indeed, putting all things ether, we can easily fancy that the last sort was the preponder- ng. It seems probable that Denis, during these ten years of bation, walked chiefly in the subterranean shades of Rascaldom; r swilling from full Circe-goblets, now snuffing with haggard ectancy the hungry wind; always 'sorely flamed-on from the ighbouring hell.' In some of his fictitious writings, a most mate acquaintance with the nether world of Polissons, Escrocs, es de Joie, Maroufles, Maquerelles, and their ways of doing, es to light: among other things (as may be seen in *Jacques le aliste*, and elsewhere), a singular theoretic expertness in what echnically named 'raising the wind;' which miracle, indeed, is himself is expressly (in this *Mémoire*) found once performing, in a style to require legal cognisance, had not the worthy her 'sneered at the dupe, and paid.' The dupe here was a elytising Abbé, whom the dog glozed with professions of life- riness and turning monk; which all evaporated, once the ey was in his hands. On other occasions, it might turn out erwise, and the gudgeon-fisher hook some shark of prey.

iterature, except in the way of Sermons for the Portuguese.

Colonies, or other the like small private dealings, had not yet opened her hospitable bosom to him. Epistles, precatory and amatory, for such as had more cash than grammar, he may have written; Catalogues also, Indexes, Advertisements, and, in these latter cases, even seen himself in print. But now he ventures forward, with bolder step, towards the interior mysteries, and begins producing Translations from the English. Literature, it is true, was then, as now, the universal free-hospital and Refuge for the Destitute, where all mortals, of what colour and kind soever, had liberty to live, or at least to die: nevertheless, for an enterprising man its resources at that time were comparatively limited. Newspapers were few; Reporting existed not, still less the inferior branches, with their fixed rate per line: Packwood and Warren, much more Panckouke and Colburn, as yet slumbered (the last century of their slumber) in the womb of Chaos; Fragmentary Panegyric-literature had not yet come into being, therefore could not be paid for. Talent wanted a free staple and workshop, where wages might be certain; and too often, like virtue, was praised and left starving. Lest the reader overrate the munificence of the literary cornucopia in France at this epoch, let us lead him into a small historical scene, that he may see with his own eyes. Diderot is the historian; the date too is many years later, when times, if anything, were mended:

'I had given a poor devil a manuscript to copy. The time he had promised it at having expired, and my man not appearing, I grow uneasy; set off to hunt him out. I find him in a hole the size of my hand, almost without daylight, not the wretchedest tatter of serge to cover his walls; two straw-bottom chairs, a flock-bed, the coverlet chiselled with worms, without curtains; a trunk in a corner of the chimney, rags of all sorts hooked above it; a little white-iron lamp, with a bottle for pediment to it; on a deal shelf, a dozen of excellent books. I chatted with him three quarters of an hour. My gentleman was naked as a worm' (*nu comme un ver:* it was August); 'lean, dingy, dry, yet serene, complaining of nothing, eating his junk of bread with appetite, and from time to time caressing his beloved, who reclined on that miserable truckle, taking-up two-thirds of the room. If I had not known that happiness resides in the soul, my Epictetus of the Rue Hyacinthe might have taught it me.'

Notwithstanding all which, Denis, now in his twenty-ninth year, sees himself necessitated to fall desperately and over head and ears in love. It was a virtuous, pure attachment; his first of that sort, probably also his last. Readers who would see the business poetic-

ally delineated, and what talent Diderot had for such delineations, may read this scene in the once-noted Drama of the *Père de Famille*. It is known that he drew from the life; and with few embellishments, which too, except in the French Theatre, do not beautify.

'Act I. Scene 7.

Saint-Albin. Father, you shall know all. Alas, how else can I move you?—The first time I ever saw her was at church. She was on her knees at the foot of the altar, beside an aged woman, whom I took for her mother. Ah, father! what modesty, what charms! . . . . Her image followed me by day, haunted me by night, left me rest nowhere. I lost my cheerfulness, my health, my peace. I could not live without seeking to find her. . . . . She has changed me; I am no longer what I was. From the first moment all shameful desires fade away from my soul; respect and admiration succeed them. Without rebuke or restraint on her part, perhaps before she had raised her eyes on me, I became timid; more so from day to day; and soon I felt as little free to attempt her virtue as her life.

The Father. And who are these women? How do they live?

Saint-Albin. Ah! if you knew it, unhappy as they are! Imagine that their toil begins before day, and often they have to continue it through the night. The mother spins on the wheel; hard coarse cloth is between the soft small fingers of Sophie, and wounds them.[2] Her eyes, the brightest eyes in this world, are worn at the light of a lamp. She lives in a garret, within four bare walls; a wooden table, a couple of chairs, a truckle-bed, that is their furniture. O Heavens, when ye fashioned such a creature, was this the lot ye destined her?

The Father. And how got you access? Speak me truth.

Saint-Albin. It is incredible what obstacles I had, what I surmounted. Though now lodged there, under the same roof, I at first did not seek to see them: if we met on the stairs, coming up, going down, I saluted them respectfully. At night, when I came home (for all day I was supposed to be at my work), I would go knock gently at their door; ask them for the little services usual among neighbours,—as water, fire, light. By degrees they grew accustomed to me; rather took to me. I offered to serve them in little things; for instance, they disliked going out at night; I fetched and carried for them.'

The real truth here is, "I ordered a set of shirts from them; said I was a Church-licentiate just bound for the Seminary of St.

[2] The real trade appears to have been a 'sempstress one in laces and linens:' the poverty is somewhat exaggerated; otherwise the shadow may be faithful enough.

Nicholas,—and, above all, had the tongue of the old serpent." But to skip much, and finish:

'Yesterday I came as usual: Sophie was alone; she was sitting with her elbows on the table, her head leant on her hand; her work had fallen at her feet. I entered without her hearing me: she sighed. Tears escaped from between her fingers, and ran along her arms. For some time, of late, I had seen her sad. Why was she weeping? What was it that grieved her? Want it could no longer be; her labour and my attentions provided against that. Threatened by the only misfortune terrible to me, I did not hesitate: I threw myself at her knees. What was her surprise! Sophie, said I, you weep; what ails you? Do not hide your trouble from me: speak to me; O, speak to me! She spoke not. Her tears continued flowing. Her eyes, where calmness no longer dwelt, but tears and anxiety, bent towards me, then turned away, then turned to me again. She said only, Poor Sergi! unhappy Sophie!—I had laid my face on her knees; I was wetting her apron with my tears.'

In a word, there is nothing for it but marriage. Old Diderot, joyous as he was to see his Son once more, started back in indignation and derision from such a proposal; and young Diderot had to return to Paris, and be forbid the beloved house, and fall sick, and come to the point of death, before the fair one's scruples could be subdued. However, she sent to get news of him; 'learnt 'that his room was a perfect dog-kennel, that he lay without 'nourishment, without attendance, wasted, sad: thereupon she 'took her resolution: mounted to him, promised to be his wife; 'and mother and daughter now became his nurses. So soon as he 'recovered, they went to Saint-Pierre, and were married at mid-'night (1744).' It only remains to add, that if the Sophie whom he had wedded fell much short of this Sophie whom he delineates, the fault was less in her qualities than in his own unstable fancy: as in youth she was 'tall, beautiful, pious and wise,' so through a long life she seems to have approved herself a woman of courage, discretion, faithful affection; far too good a wife for such a husband.

'My father was of too jealous a character to let my mother continue a traffic, which obliged her to receive strangers and treat with them: he begged her therefore to give-up that business; she was very loath to consent; poverty did not alarm her on her own account, but her mother was old, unlikely to remain with her long; and the fear of not being able to provide for all her wants was afflicting: nevertheless, persuading herself that this sacrifice was for her husband's happiness, she made it

A char-woman looked-in daily, to sweep their little lodging, and fetch provisions for the day; my mother managed all the rest. Often when my father dined or supped out, she would dine or sup on bread; and took a great pleasure in the thought that, next day, she could double her little ordinary for him. Coffee was too considerable a luxury for a household of this sort: but she could not think of his wanting it, and every day gave him six sous to go and have his cup, at the Café de la Régence, and see the chess-playing there.

'It was now that he translated the *History of Greece* in three volumes' (by the English Stanyan); 'he sold it for a hundred crowns. This sum brought a sort of supply into the house. * * *

'My mother had been brought to bed of a daughter: she was now big a second time. In spite of her precautions, solitary life, and the pain she had taken to pass-off her husband as her brother, his family, in the seclusion of their province, learnt that he was living with two women. Directly, the birth, the morals, the character of my mother became objects of the blackest calumny. He foresaw that discussions by letter would be endless; he found it simpler to put his wife into the stage-coach, and send her to his parents. She had just been delivered of a son; he announced this event to his father, and the departure of my mother. "She set out yesterday," said he; "she will be with you in three days. You will say to her what shall please you, and send her back when you are tired of her." Singular as this sort of explanation was, they determined, in any case, on sending my father's sister to receive her. Their first welcome was more than cold: the evening grew less painful to her; but next morning betimes she went in to her father-in-law; treated him as if he had been her own father; her respect and her caresses charmed the good, sensible old man. Coming down stairs, she began working: refused nothing that could please a family whom she was not afraid of, and wished to be loved by. Her conduct was the only excuse she gave for her husband's choice: her appearance had prepossessed them in her favour; her simplicity, her piety, her talents for household economy secured her their tenderness; they promised her that my father's disinheritment should be revoked. They kept her three months; and sent her back loaded with whatever they could think would be useful or agreeable to her.'

All this is beautiful, told with a graceful simplicity; the beautiful, real-ideal, prose-idyl of a Literary Life: but, alas, in the music of your prose-idyl there lurks ever an accursed dissonance (or the players make one); where men are, there will be mischief. 'This journey,' writes Mademoiselle, 'cost my mother many tears.' What will the reader say when he finds that Monsieur Diderot has, in

the interim, taken up with a certain Madame de Puisieux; and welcomes his brave Wife (worthy to have been a true man's) with a heart and bosom henceforth estranged from her! Madame Diderot 'made two journeys to Langres, and both were fatal to her peace.' This affair of the Puisieux, for whom he despicably enough not only burned, but toiled and made money, kept him busy for some ten years; till at length, finding that she played false, he gave her up; and minor miscellaneous flirtations seem to have succeeded. But, returning from her *second* journey, the much-enduring Housemother finds him in meridian glory with one Voland, the *un*-maiden Daughter of a 'Financier's Widow;' to whom we owe this present preternuptial *Correspondance;* to whom indeed he mainly devoted himself for the rest of his life,—'parting his time between his study and her;' to his own wife and household giving little save the trouble of cooking for him, and of painfully, with repressed or irrepressible discontent, keeping up some appearance of terms with him. Alas! alas! and his Puisieux seems to have been a hollow mercenary (to whose scandalous soul he reckons obscenest of Books fit nutriment); and the Voland an elderly spinster, with *cœur sensible, cœur honnête, âme tendre et bonne!* And then those old dinings on bread; the six sous spared for his cup of coffee! Foolish Diderot, scarcely pardonable Diderot! A hard saying is this, yet a true one: Scoundrelism signifies injustice, and should be left to scoundrels alone. For thy wronged wife, whom thou hadst sworn far other things to, ever in her afflictions (here so hostilely scanned and written of) a true sympathy will awaken; and sorrow that the patient, or even impatient, endurances of such a woman should be matter of speculation and self-gratulation to such another.

But looking out of doors now, from an indifferently-guided Household, which must have fallen shamefully in pieces, had not a wife been wiser and stronger than her husband,—we find the Philosophe making distinct way with the Bibliopolic world; and likely, in the end, to pick up a kind of living there. The Stanyan's *History of Greece;* the other English-translated, nameless *Medical Dictionary,* are dropped by all editors as worthless: a like fate might, with little damage, have overtaken the *Essai sur le Mérite et la Vertu,* rendered or redacted out of Shaftesbury's *Characteristics.* In which redaction, with its Notes, of anxious Orthodoxy, and bottomless Falsehood looking through it, we individually have found nothing, save a confirmation of the old twice-repeated

experience, That in Shaftesbury's famed Book there lay, if any meaning, a meaning of such long-windedness, circumvolution and lubricity, that, like an eel, it must forever slip through our fingers, and leave us alone among the gravel. One reason may partly be, that Shaftesbury was not only a Sceptic but an Amateur Sceptic; which sort a darker, more earnest, have long since swallowed and abolished. The meaning of a delicate, perfumed, gentlemanly individual standing there, in that war of Titans (hill meeting hill with all its woods), and putting out hand to it—with a pair of tweezers?

However, our Denis has now emerged from the intermediate Hades of Translatorship into the Heaven of perfected Authorship: empties his commonplace book of *Pensées Philosophiques* (it is said in the space of four days); writes his Metaphysico-Baconian phantasmagories on the *Interprétation de la Nature* (an endless business to 'interpret'); and casts the money-produce of both into the lap of his Scarlet-woman Puisieux. Then forthwith, for the same object, in a shameful fortnight, puts together the beastliest of all past, present or future dull Novels; a difficult feat, unhappily not an impossible one. If any mortal creature, even a Reviewer, be again compelled to glance into that Book, let him bathe himself in running water, put on change of raiment, and be unclean until the even. As yet the Metaphysico-Atheistic *Lettre sur les Sourds et Muets* and *Lettre sur les Aveugles*, which brings glory and a three-months lodging in the Castle of Vincennes, are at years' distance in the background. But already by his gilded tongue, growing repute and sanguine projecting temper, he has persuaded Booksellers to pay-off the Abbé Gua, with his lean Version of *Chambers's Dictionary of Arts*, and convert it into an *Encyclopédie*, with himself and D'Alembert for Editors: and is henceforth (from the year of grace 1751) a duly dis-indentured *Man of Letters*, an indisputable and more and more conspicuous member of that surprising guild.

Literature, ever since its appearance in our European world, especially since it emerged out of Cloisters into the open Market-place, and endeavoured to make itself room, and gain a subsistence there, has offered the strangest phases, and consciously or unconsciously done the strangest work. Wonderful Ark of the Deluge, where so much that is precious, nay priceless to mankind, floats carelessly onwards through the Chaos of distracted Times,—if so be it may one day find an Ararat to rest on, and see the waters abate! The History of Literature, especially for the last two

centuries, is our proper Church History; the other Church, during that time, having more and more decayed from its old functions and influence, and ceased to have a history. And now, to look only at the outside of the matter, think of the Tassos and older or later Racines, struggling to raise their office from its pristine abasement of court-jester; and teach and elevate the World, in conjunction with that other quite heteroclite task of solacing and glorifying some *Pullus Jovis*, in plush cloak and other gilt or golden king-tackle, that they in the interim might live thereby! Consider the Shakspeares and Molières, plying a like trade, but on a double material; glad of any royal or noble patronage, but eliciting, as their surer stay, some fractional contribution from the thick-skinned, many-pocketed million. Saumaises, now bully-fighting 'for a hundred gold Jacobuses,' now closeted with Queen Christinas, who blow the fire with their own queenly mouth, to make a pedant's breakfast; anon cast forth (being scouted and confuted), and dying of heartbreak, coupled with henpeck. Then the Laws of Copyright, the Quarrels of Authors, the Calamities of Authors; the Heynes dining on boiled peascods, the Jean Pauls on water; the Johnsons bedded and boarded on fourpence-halfpenny a-day. Lastly, the unutterable confusion worse confounded of our present Periodical existence; when, among other phenomena, a young Fourth Estate (whom all the three elder may try if they can hold) is seen sprawling and staggering tumultuously through the world; as yet but a huge, raw-boned, lean *calf;* fast growing, however, to be a Pharaoh's lean cow,—of whom let the fat kine beware!

All this, of the mere exterior, or dwelling-place of Literature, not yet glancing at the internal, at the Doctrines emitted or striven after, will the future Eusebius and Mosheim have to record; and (in some small degree) explain to us what it means. Unfathomable is its meaning: Life, mankind's Life, ever from its unfathomable fountains, rolls wondrous on, another though the same; in Literature too, the seeing eye will distinguish Apostles of the Gentiles, Proto- and Duetero-martyrs; still less will the Simon Magus, or Apollonius with the golden thigh, be wanting. But all now is on an infinitely *wider scale;* the elements of it all swim far-scattered, and still only striving towards union;—whereby, indeed, it happens that to the most, under this new figure, they are unrecognisable.

French Literature, in Diderot's time, presents itself in a certain state of culmination, where causes long prepared are rapidly be-

coming effects; and was doubtless in one of its more notable epochs. Under the Economic aspect, in France, as in England, this was the Age of Booksellers; when, as a Dodsley and Miller could risk capital in an *English Dictionary*, a Lebreton and Briasson could become purveyors and commissariat-officers for a French *Encyclopédie*. The world forever loves Knowledge, and would part with its last sixpence in payment thereof: this your Dodsleys and Lebretons well saw; moreover they could act on it, for as yet PUFFERY was not. Alas, offences must come; Puffery from the first was inevitable: woe to them, nevertheless, by whom it did come! Meanwhile, as we said, it slept in Chaos; the Word of man and tradesman was still partially credible to man. Booksellers were therefore a possible, were even a necessary class of mortals, though a strangely anomalous one; had they kept from lying, or lied with any sort of moderation, the anomaly might have lasted still longer. For the present, they managed in Paris as elsewhere: the Timber-headed could perceive that for Thought the world would give money; farther, by mere shopkeeper cunning, that true Thought, as in the end sure to be recognised, and by nature infinitely more durable, was better to deal in than false; farther, by credible tradition of public consent, that such and such had the talent of furnishing true Thought (say rather *truer*, as the more correct word): on this hint the Timber-headed spake and bargained. Nay, let us say he bargained, and worked, for most part with industrious assiduity, with patience, suitable prudence; nay sometimes with touches of generosity and magnanimity, beautifully irradiating the circumambient mass of greed and dulness. For the rest, the two high contracting parties roughed it out as they could; so that if Booksellers, in their back-parlour Valhalla, drank wine out of the skulls of Authors (as they were fabled to do), Authors, in the front-apartments, from time to time, gave them a Roland for their Oliver: a Johnson can knock his Osborne on the head, like any other Bull of Bashan; a Diderot commands his corpulent Panckouke to "Leave the room, and go to the devil; *Allez au diable, sortez de chez moi!*"

Under the internal or Doctrinal aspect, again, French Literature, we can see, knew far better what it was about than English. That fable, indeed, first set afloat by some Trevoux Journalist of the period, and which has floated foolishly enough into every European ear since then, of there being an Association specially organised for the destruction of government, religion, society, civility (not to

speak of tithes, rents, life and property), all over the world; which hell-serving Association met at the Baron d'Holbach's, there had its blue-light sederunts, and published Transactions legible to all, —was and remains nothing but a fable. Minute-books, president's hammer, ballot-box, punch-bowl of such Pandemonium have not been produced to the world. The sect of Philosophes existed at Paris, but as other sects do; held together by loosest, informal, unrecognised ties; within which every one, no doubt, followed his own natural objects, of proselytism, of glory, of getting a livelihood. Meanwhile, whether in constituted association or not, French Philosophy resided in the persons of the French Philosophes; and, as a mighty deep-struggling Force, was at work there. Deep-struggling, irrepressible; the subterranean fire, which long heaved unquietly, and shook all things with an ominous motion, was here, we can say, forming itself a decided spiracle;—which, by and by, as French Revolution, became that volcano-crater, world-famous, world-appalling, world-maddening, as yet very far from closed! Fontenelle said, he wished he could live sixty years longer, and see what that universal infidelity, depravity and dissolution of all ties would turn to. In threescore years Fontenelle might have seen strange things; but not the end of the phenomenon perhaps in three hundred.

Why France became such a volcano-crater, what specialties there were in the French national character, and political, moral, intellectual condition, by virtue whereof French Philosophy there and not elsewhere, then and not sooner or later, evolved itself,—is an inquiry that has been often put, and cheerfully answered; the true answer of which might lead us far. Still deeper than this *Whence* were the question of *Whither;*—with which, also, we intermeddle not here. Enough for us to understand that there verily a Scene of Universal History is being enacted, a little living TIME-picture in the bosom of ETERNITY;—and, with the feeling due in that case, to ask not so much Why it is, as What it is. Leaving priorities and posteriorities aside, and cause-and-effect to adjust itself elsewhere, conceive so many vivid spirits thrown together into the Europe, into the Paris of that day, and see how they demean themselves, what they work-out and attain there.

As the *mystical* enjoyment of an object goes infinitely farther than the *intellectual*, and we can *look* at a picture with delight and profit, after all that we can be *taught* about it is grown poor and [illegible]risome; so here, and by far stronger reason, these light Letters

of Diderot to the Voland, again unveiling and *showing* Parisian Life, are worth more to us than many a heavy tome laboriously struggling to explain it. True, we have seen the picture, that same Parisian life-picture, ten times already; but we can look at it an eleventh time: nay this, as we said, is not a canvas-picture, but a life-picture, of whose significance there is no end for us. Grudge not the elderly Spinster her existence, then; say not she has lived in vain. For what of History there is in this Preternuptial Correspondence should we not endeavour to forgive and forget all else, the *sensibilité* itself? The curtain which had fallen for almost a century is again drawn up; the scene is alive and busy. Figures grown historical are here seen face to face, and live before us.

A strange theatre that of French Philosophism; a strange dramatic corps! Such another corps for brilliancy and levity, for gifts and vices, and all manner of sparkling inconsistencies, the world is not like to see again. There is Patriarch Voltaire, of all Frenchmen the most French; he whom the French had, as it were, long waited for, 'to produce at once, in a single life, all that French genius most prized and most excelled in;' of him and his wondrous ways, as of one known, we need say little. Instant enough to 'crush the Abomination, *écraser l'Infâme*,' he has prosecuted his Jesuit-hunt over many lands and many centuries, in many ways, with an alacrity that has made him dangerous, and endangered him: he now sits at Ferney, withdrawn from the active toils of the chase; cheers-on his hunting-dogs mostly from afar: Diderot, a beagle of the first vehemence, he has rather to restrain. That all extant and possible Theology be abolished, will not content the fell Denis, as surely it might have done; the Patriarch has to address him a friendly admonition on his Atheism, and make him eat it again.

D'Alembert, too, we may consider as one known; of all the Philosophe fraternity, him who in speech and conduct agrees best with our English notions: an independent, patient, prudent man; of great faculty, especially of great clearness and method; famous in Mathematics; no less so, to the wonder of some, in the intellectual provinces of Literature. A foolish wonder; as if the Thinker could think only on one thing, and not on *any* thing he had a call towards. D'Alembert's *Mélanges*, as the impress of a genuine spirit, in peculiar position and probation, have still instruction for us, both of head and heart. The man lives retired here, in questionable

seclusion with his Espinasse; incurs the suspicion of apostasy, because in the *Encyclopédie* he saw no Evangel and celestial Revelation, but only a huge Folio Dictionary; and would not venture life and limb on it without a 'consideration.' Sad was it to Diderot to see his fellow-voyager make for port, and disregard signals, when the sea-krakens rose round him! They did not quarrel; were always friendly when they met, but latterly met only at the rate of 'once in the two years.' D'Alembert died when Diderot was on his deathbed: "My friend," said the latter to the news-bringer, "a great light is gone out."

Hovering in the distance, with wostruck, minatory air, stern-beckoning, comes Rousseau. Poor Jean Jacques! Alternately deified, and cast to the dogs; a deep-minded, high-minded, even noble, yet wofully misarranged mortal, with all misformations of Nature intensated to the verge of madness by unfavourable Fortune. A lonely man; his life a long soliloquy! The wandering Tiresias of the time;—in whom, however, did lie prophetic meaning, such as none of the others offer. Whereby indeed it might partly be that the world went to such extremes about him; that, long after his departure, we have seen one whole nation worship him, and a Burke, in the name of another, class him with the offscourings of the earth. His true character, with its lofty aspirings and poor performings; and how the spirit of the man worked so wildly, like celestial fire in a thick dark element of chaos, and shot-forth ethereal radiance, all-piercing lightning, yet could not illuminate, was quenched and did not conquer: this, with what lies in it, may now be pretty accurately appreciated. Let his history teach all whom it concerns, to '*harden* themselves against the ills which Mother Nature will try them with;' to seek within their own soul what the world must forever deny them; and say composedly to the Prince of the Power of this lower Earth and Air: Go thou thy way; I go mine!

Rousseau and Diderot were early friends: who has forgotten how Jean Jacques walked to the Castle of Vincennes, where Denis (for heretical Metaphysics, and irreverence to the Strumpetocracy) languishes in durance; and devised his first Literary Paradox on the road thither? Their Quarrel, which, as a fashionable hero of the time complains, occupied all Paris, is likewise famous enough. The reader recollects that heroical epistle of Diderot to Grimm on that occasion, and the sentence: 'O, my friend, let us continue 'virtuous; for the state of those who have ceased to be so makes

me shudder.' But is the reader aware what the fault of him 'who ıas ceased to be so' was! A series of ravelments and squabbling ;rudges, 'which,' says Mademoiselle with much simplicity, 'the Devil himself could not understand.' Alas, the Devil well under-tood it, and Tyrant Grimm too did, who had the ear of Diderot, ınd poured into it his own unjust, almost abominable spleen. Clean ıaper need not be soiled with a foul story, where the main actor s only 'Tyran le Blanc;' enough to know that the continually ;irtuous Tyrant found Diderot 'extremely impressionable;' so poor Jean Jacques must go his ways (with both the scath and the scorn), ınd among his many woes bear this also. Diderot is not blamable; ›itiable rather; for who would be a pipe, which not Fortune only, ›ut any Sycophant may play tunes on?

Of this same Tyrant Grimm, desiring to speak peaceably, we ;hall say little. The man himself is less remarkable than his 'ortune. Changed times indeed, since the threadbare German Bursch quitted Ratisbon, with the sound of catcalls in his ears, the ›ondemned 'Tragedy, *Banise*,' in his pocket; and fled southward, ›n a thin travelling-tutorship;—since Rousseau met you, Herr Grimm, 'a young man described as seeking a situation, and whose appearance indicated the pressing necessity he was in of soon find-ing one!' Of a truth, you have flourished since then, Herr Grimm: ıis introductions of you to Diderot, to Holbach, to the black-locked D'Epinay, where not only you are wormed-in, but he is wormed-›ut, have turned to somewhat; the Threadbare has become well-ıapped, and got ruffles and jewel-rings, and walks abroad in sword ınd bagwig, and lacquers his brass countenance with rouge, and so 'as *Tyran le Blanc*) recommends himself to the fair; and writes Parisian Philosophe-gossip to the Hyperborean Kings, and his Grimm's Leaves,' copied 'to the number of twenty,' are bread of ife to many; and cringes here, and domineers there; and lives at ıis ease in the Creation, in an effective *tendresse* with the D'Epinay, ıusband or custom of the country not objecting!—Poor Börne, the ıew German Flying-Sansculotte, feels his mouth water, at Paris, ›ver these fleshpots of Grimm: reflecting with what heart he too ›ould write 'Leaves,' and be fed thereby. Börne, my friend, those lays are done! While Northern Courts were a 'Lunar Versailles,' t was well to have an Uriel stationed in their Sun there; but of ıll spots in this Universe (hardly excepting Tophet) Paris now is ;he one we at court could best *dispense* with news from; never ıore, in these centuries, will a Grimm be missioned thither; never

a 'Leaf of Borne' be blown court-wards by any wind. As for the Grimm, we can see that he was a man made to rise in the world: a fair, even handsome outfit of talent, wholly marketable; skill in music, and the like, encyclopedical readiness in all ephemera; saloon-wit, a trenchant, unhesitating head; above all, a heart ever in the right place,—in the market-place, namely, and marked 'for sale to the highest bidder.' Really a methodical, adroit, managing man. By 'hero-worship,' and the cunning appliance of alternate sweet and sullen, he has brought Diderot to be his patient milk-cow, whom he can milk an Essay from, a Volume from, when he lists. Victorious Grimm! He even escaped those same 'horrors of the French Revolution' (with loss of his ruffles); and was seen at the Court of Gotha, sleek and well to live, within the memory of man.

The world has heard of M. le Chevalier de Saint-Lambert; considerable in Literature, in Love and War. He is here again, singing the frostiest Pastorals; happily, however, only in the distance, and the jingle of his wires soon dies away. Of another Chevalier, worthy Jaucourt, be the name mentioned, and little more: he digs unweariedly, molewise, in the Encyclopedic field, catching what he can, and shuns the light. Then there is Helvetius, the well-fed Farmer-general, enlivening his sybaritic life with metaphysic paradoxes. His revelations *De l'Homme* and *De l'Esprit* breathe the freest Philosophe-spirit, with Philanthropy and Sensibility enough: the greater is our astonishment to find him here so ardent a Preserver of the Game:

'This Madame de Nocé,' writes Diderot, treating of the Bourbonne Hot-springs, 'is a neighbour of Helvetius. She told us, the Philosopher was the unhappiest man in the world on his estates. He is surrounded there by neighbours and peasants who detest him. They break the windows of his mansion, plunder his grounds by night, cut his trees, throw down his walls, tear-up his spiked paling. He dare not go to shoot a hare, without a train of people to guard him. You will ask me, How it has come to pass? By a boundless zeal for his game. M. Fagon, his predecessor, used to guard the grounds with two keepers and two guns. Helvetius has twenty-four, and cannot do it. These men have a small premium for every poacher they can catch; and there is no sort of mischief they will not cause to get more and more of these. Besides, they are themselves so many hired poachers. Again, the border of his woods was inhabited by a set of poor people, who had got huts there; he has caused all the huts to be swept away. It is these, and such acts of repeated tyranny, that have raised him enemies of all kinds; and the more

insolent, says Madame de Nocé, as they have discovered that the worthy Philosopher is a coward. I would not have his fine estate of Voré as a present, had I to live there in these perpetual alarms. What profits he draws from that mode of management I know not: but he is alone there; he is hated, he is in fear. Ah! how much wiser was our lady Geoffrin; when speaking of a lawsuit that tormented her, she said to me, "Get done with my lawsuit; they want money? I have it. Give them money. What better use can I make of my money than to buy peace with it?" In Helvetius's place, I would have said, "They kill me a few hares and rabbits; let them be doing. These poor creatures have no shelter but my forest; let them stay there." I should have reasoned like M. Fagon, and been adored like him.'

Alas! are not Helvetius's preserves, at this hour, all broken up, and lying desecrated? Neither can the others, in what latitude and longitude soever, remain eternally impregnable. But if a Rome was once saved by geese, need we wonder that an England is lost by partridges? We are sons of Eve, who bartered Paradise for an apple.

But to return to Paris and its Philosophe Church-militant. Here is a Marmontel, an active subaltern thereof, who fights in a small way, through the *Mercure;* and, in rose-pink romance-pictures, strives to celebrate the 'moral sublime.' An Abbé Morellet, busy with the Corn-Laws, walks in at intervals, stooping, shrunk together, 'as if to get nearer himself, *pour être plus près de lui-même.*' The rogue Galiani alternates between Naples and Paris; Galiani, by good luck, has 'forever *settled* the question of the Corn-Laws:' an idle fellow otherwise; a spiritual Lazzarone; full of frolics, wanton quips, anti-jesuit *gesta*, and wild Italian humour; the sight of his swart, sharp face is the signal for Laughter,—in which, indeed, the Man himself has unhappily evaporated, leaving no result behind him.

Of the Baron d'Holbach thus much may be said, that both at Paris and at Grandval he gives good dinners. His two or three score volumes of Atheistic Philosophism, which he published (at his own expense), may now be forgotten and even forgiven. A purse open and deep, a heart kindly-disposed, quiet, sociable, or even friendly; these, with excellent wines, gain him a literary elevation, which no thinking faculty he had could have pretended to. An easy, laconic gentleman; of grave politeness; apt to lose temper at play; yet, on the whole, good-humoured, eupeptic and eupractic: there may he live, and let live.

Nor is heaven's last gift to man wanting here; the natural sovereignty of women. Your Châtelets, Epinays, Espinasses, Geoffrins, Deffands, will play their part too: there shall, in all senses, be not only Philosophers, but Philosophesses. Strange enough is the figure these women make: good souls, it was a strange world for them. What with metaphysics and flirtation, system of nature, fashion of dress-caps, vanity, curiosity, jealousy, atheism, rheumatism, *traités*, *bouts-rimés*, noble-sentiments, and rouge-pots,—the vehement female intellect sees itself sailing on a chaos, where a wiser might have wavered, if not foundered. For the rest (as an accurate observer has remarked), they become a sort of Lady-Presidents in that society; attain great influence; and, imparting as well as receiving, communicate to all that is done or said somewhat of their own peculiar tone.

In a world so wide and multifarious, this little band of Philosophes, acting and speaking as they did, had a most various reception to expect; votes divided to the uttermost. The mass of mankind, busy enough with their own work, of course heeded them only when forced to do it; these, meanwhile, form the great neutral element, in which the battle has to fight itself; the two hosts, according to their several success, to recruit themselves. Of the Higher Classes, it appears, the small proportion not wholly occupied in eating and dressing, and therefore open to such a question, are in their favour,—strange as to us it may seem; the spectacle of a Church pulled down is, in stagnant times, amusing; nor do the generality, on either side, yet see whither ulteriorly it is tending. The Reading World, which was then more than now the intelligent, inquiring world, reads eagerly (as it will ever do) whatsoever skilful, sprightly, reasonable-looking word is written for it; enjoying, appropriating the same; perhaps without fixed judgment, or deep care of any kind. Careful enough, fixed enough, on the other hand, is the Jesuit Brotherhood; in these days sick unto death; but only the bitterer and angrier for that. Dangerous are the death-convulsions of an expiring Sorbonne, ever and anon filling Paris with agitation: it behoves your Philosophe to walk warily, and in many a critical circumstance, to weep with the one cheek, and smile with the other.

Nor is Literature itself wholly Philosophe: apart from the Jesuit regulars, in their Trevoux Journals, Sermons, Episcopal Charges, and other camps or casemates, a considerable Guerrilla or Reviewer

ırce (consisting, as usual, of smugglers, unemployed destitute ersons, deserters who have been refused promotion, and other the ke broken characters) has organised itself, and maintains a harass- ıg bush-warfare: of these the chieftain is Fréron, once in tolerable ɜpute with the world, had he not, carrying too high a head, struck is foot on stones, and stumbled. By the continual depreciating f talent grown at length undeniable, he has sunk low enough: 'oltaire, in the *Ecossaise*, can bring him on the stage, and have im killed by laughter, under the name, sufficiently recognisable, f *Wasp* (in French, *Frelon*). Another Empecedor, still more ateful, is Palissot, who has written and got acted a Comedy of *Les 'hilosophes*, at which the Parisians, spite of its dulness, have also ıughed. To laugh at *us*, the so meritorious us! Heard mankind ver the like? For poor Palissot, had he fallen into Philosophe ands, serious bodily tar-and-feathering might have been appre- ended: as it was, they do what the pen, with its gall and copperas, ın; invoke Heaven and Earth to witness the treatment of Divine 'hilosophy;—with which view, in particular, friend Diderot seems ɔ have composed his *Rameau's Nephew*, wherein Palissot and others f his kidney are (figuratively speaking) mauled and mangled, and ıft not in dog's likeness. So divided was the world, Literary, lourtly, Miscellaneous, on this matter: it was a confused anomalous ıme.

Among its more notable anomalies may be reckoned the relations f French Philosophism to Foreign Crowned Heads. In Prussia ıere is a Philosophe King; in Russia a Philosophe Empress: the 'hole North swarms with kinglets and queenlets of the like temper. Iay, as we have seen, they entertain their special ambassador in 'hilosophedom, their lion's-provider to furnish spiritual Philosophe- rovender; and pay him well. The great Frederic, the great 'atherine are as nursing-father and nursing-mother to this new 'hurch of Antichrist; in all straits, ready with money, honourable ɔyal asylum, help of every sort,—which, however, except in the ıoney-shape, the wiser of our Philosophes are shy of receiving. 'oltaire had tried it in the asylum-shape, and found it unsuitable; D'Alembert and Diderot decline repeating the experiment. What ıiracles are wrought by the arch-magician Time! Could these 'rederics, Catherines, Josephs, have looked forward some threescore ɜars; and beheld the Holy Alliance in conference at Laybach! ut so goes the world: kings are not seraphic doctors, with gift of rescience, but only men, with common eyesight, participating in

the influences of their generation: kings too, like all mortals, have a certain love of knowledge; still more infallibly, a certain desire of applause; a certain delight in mortifying one another. Thus what is persecuted here finds refuge there; and ever, one way or other, the New works itself out full-formed from under the Old; nay the Old, as in this instance, sits sedulously hatching a cockatrice that will one day devour it.

No less anomalous, confused and contradictory is the relation of the Philosophes to their own Government. How, indeed, could it be otherwise, their relation to Society being still so undecided; and the Government, which might have endeavoured to adjust and preside over this, being itself in a state of anomaly, death-lethargy and doting decrepitude? The true conduct and position for a French Sovereign towards French Literature, in that country might have been, though perhaps of all things the most important, one of the most difficult to discover and accomplish. What chance was there that a thick-blooded Louis Quinze, from his *Parc aux Cerfs*, should discover it, should have the faintest inkling of it? His 'peaceable soul' was quite otherwise employed: Minister after Minister must consult his own several insight, his own whim, above all his own ease: and so the whole business, now when we look on it, comes out one of the most botched, piebald, inconsistent, lamentable and even ludicrous objects in the history of State-craft. Alas, necessity has no *law:* the statesman, without light, perhaps even without eyes, whom Destiny nevertheless constrains to 'govern' his nation in a time of World-Downfall, what shall he do, but if so may be, collect the taxes; prevent in some degree murder and arson; and for the rest, wriggle hither and thither, return upon his steps, clout-up old rents and open new,—and, on the whole, eat his victuals, and let the Devil govern it? Of the pass to which Statesmanship had come in respect of Philosophism, let this one fact be evidence instead of a thousand. M. de Malesherbes writes to warn Diderot that, next day, he will give orders to have all his papers seized.—Impossible! answers Diderot: *juste ciel!* how shall I sort them, where shall I hide them, within four-and-twenty hours? *Send them to me*, answers M. de Malesherbes! Thither accordingly they go, under lock and seal; and the hungry catchpoles find nothing but empty drawers.

The *Encyclopédie* was set forth first 'with approbation and *Privilége du Roi;*' next, it was stopped by Authority: next, the public murmuring, suffered to proceed; then again, positively for

the last time, stopped,—and, no whit the less, printed, and written, and circulated, under thin disguises, some hundred and fifty printers working at it with open doors, all Paris knowing of it, only Authority winking hard. Choiseul, in his resolute way, had now shut the eyes of Authority, and kept them shut. Finally, to crown the whole matter, a copy of the prohibited Book lies in the King's private library: and owes favour, and a withdrawal of the prohibition, to the foolishest accident:

'One of Louis Fifteenth's domestics told me,' says Voltaire, 'that once, the King his master supping, in private circle (*en petite compagnie*), at Trianon, the conversation turned first on the chase, and from this on gunpowder. Some one said that the best powder was made of sulphur, saltpetre, and charcoal, in equal parts. The Duc de la Vallière, with better knowledge, maintained that for good powder there must be one part of sulphur, one of charcoal, with five of saltpetre, well filtered, well evaporated, well crystallised.

'"It is pleasant," said the Duc de Nivernois, "that we who daily amuse ourselves with killing partridges in the Park of Versailles, and sometimes with killing men, or getting ourselves killed, on the frontiers, should not know what that same work of killing is done with."

'"Alas! we are in the like case with all things in this world," answered Madame de Pompadour: "I know not what the rouge I put upon my cheeks is made of; you would bring me to a nonplus, if you asked how the silk hose I wear are manufactured." "'Tis a pity," said the Duc de la Vallière, "that his Majesty confiscated our *Dictionnaires Encyclopédiques*; which cost us our hundred pistoles; we should soon find the decision of all our questions there." The King justified the act of confiscation; he had been informed that these twenty-one folio volumes, to be found lying on all ladies' toilettes, were the most pernicious things in the world for the kingdom of France; he had resolved to look for himself if this were true, before suffering the book to circulate. Towards the end of the repast, he sends three of his valets to bring him a copy; they enter, struggling under seven volumes each. The article *powder* is turned up; the Duc de la Vallière is found to be right: and soon Madame de Pompadour learns the difference between the old *rouge d'Espagne* with which the ladies of Madrid coloured their cheeks, and the *rouge des dames* of Paris. She finds that the Greek and Roman ladies painted with a purple extracted from the *murex*, and that consequently our scarlet is the purple of the ancients; and that there is more purple in the *rouge d'Espagne*, and more cochineal in that of France. She learns how stockings are woven; the stocking-frame described there fills her with amazement. "Ah, what a glorious book!" cried she. "Sire, did you confiscate

this magazine of all useful things, that you might have it wholly to yourself, then, and be the one learned man in your kingdom?" Each threw himself on the volumes, like the daughters of Lycomedes on the jewels of Ulysses; each found forthwith whatever he was seeking. Some who had lawsuits were surprised to see the decision of them there. The King reads there all the rights of his crown. "Well, in truth (*mais vraiment*)," said he, "I know not why they said so much ill of the book." "Ah, sire," said the Duc de Nivernois, "does not your Majesty see," &c. &c.'

In such a confused world, under such unheard-of circumstances, must friend Diderot ply his editorial labours. No sinecure is it! Penetrating into all subjects and sciences; waiting and rummaging in all libraries, laboratories; nay, for many years, fearlessly diving into all manner of workshops, unscrewing stocking-looms, and even working thereon (that the department of *Arts and Trades* might be perfect); then seeking out contributors, and flattering them, quickening their laziness, getting payment for them; quarrelling with Bookseller and Printer: bearing all miscalculations, misfortunes, misdoings of so many fallible men (for there all at last lands) on his single back: surely this was enough, without having farther to do battle with the beagles of Office, perilously withstand them, expensively sop them, toilsomely elude them! Nevertheless, he perseveres, and will not but persevere;—less, perhaps, with the deliberate courage of a Man, who has compared result and outlay, than with the passionate obstinacy of a Woman, who, having made-up her mind, will shrink at no ladder of ropes, but ride with her lover, though all the four Elements gainsay it. At every new concussion from the Powers, he roars; say rather shrieks, for there is a female shrillness in it; proclaiming, Murder! Robbery! Rape! invoking men and angels; meanwhile proceeds unweariedly with the printing. It is a hostile building-up, not of the Holy Temple at Jerusalem, but of the Unholy one at Paris: thus must Diderot, like Ezra, come to strange extremities; and every workman works with his trowel in one hand, in the other his weapon of war; that so, in spite of all Tiglaths, the work go on, and the topstone of it be brought out with shouting.

Shouting! Ah, what faint broken quaver is that in the shout; as of a man that shouted with the throat only, and inwardly was bowed down with dispiritment? It is Diderot's faint broken quaver; he is sick and heavy of soul. Scandalous enough: the Goth Lebreton, loving, as he says, his head better even than his profit, has for years gone privily at dead of night to the finished

Encyclopedic proof-sheets, and there with nefarious pen scratched out whatever to *him* seemed dangerous; filling-up the gap as *he* could, or merely letting it fill itself up. Heaven and Earth! Not only are the finer Philosophe sallies mostly cut out,—but hereby has the work become a sunken, hitching, ungainly mass, little better than a monstrosity. Goth! Hun! sacrilegious Attila of the book-trade! O, surely for this treason the hottest of Dante's Purgatory were too temperate. Infamous art thou, Lebreton, to all ages—that read the *Encyclopédie;* and Philosophes not yet in swaddling-clothes shall gnash their teeth over thee, and spit upon thy memory.—Lebreton pockets both the abuse and the cash, and sleeps sound in a whole skin. The able Editor could never be said to get entirely the better of it while he lived.

Now, however, it is time that, quitting generalities, we go, in this fine autumn weather, to Holbach's at Grandval, where the hardworked but unwearied Encyclopedist, with plenty of ink and writing-paper, is sure to be. Ever in the Holbach household his arrival is a holyday; if a quarrel spring up, it is only because he will not come, or too soon goes away. A man of social talent, with such a tongue as Diderot's, in a mansion where the only want to be guarded against was that of wit, could not be other than welcome. He composes Articles there, and walks, and dines, and plays cards, and talks; languishingly waits letters from his Voland, copiously writes to her. It is in these copious love-despatches that the whole matter is so graphically painted: we have an Asmodeus' view of the interior life there, and live it over again with him. The Baroness, in red silk tempered with snow-white gauze, is beauty and grace itself; her old Mother is a perfect romp of fifteen, or younger; the house is lively with company; the Baron, as we said, speaks little, but to the purpose; is seen sometimes with his pipe, in dressing-gown and red slippers; otherwise the best of landlords. Remarkable figures drop in; generals disabled at Quebec; fashionable gentlemen rusticating in the neighbourhood; Abbés, such as Galiani, Raynal, Morellet; perhaps Grimm and his Epinay; other Philosophes and Philosophesses. Guests too of less dignity, acting rather as butts than as bowmen: for it is the part of every one either to have wit, or to be the cause of having it.

Among these latter, omitting many, there is one whom, for country's sake, we must particularise; an ancient personage, named Hoop (Hope), whom they called *Père* Hoop; by birth a Scotchman Hoop seems to be a sort of fixture at Grandval, not bowman, there-

fore butt; and is shot at for his lodging. A most shrivelled, wind-dried, dyspeptic, chill-shivering individual; Professor of Life-weariness; sits dozing there,—dozes there, however, with one eye open. He submits to be called *Mummy*, without a shrug; cowers over the fire, at the warmest corner. Yet is there a certain sardonic subacidity in Père Hoop; when he slowly unlocks his leathern jaw, we hear him with a sort of pleasure. Hoop has been in various countries and situations; in that croaking metallic voice of his, can tell a distinct story. Diderot apprehended he would one day hang himself: if so, what Museum now holds his remains? The Parent Hoops, it would seem, still dwelt in the city of Edinburgh; he, the second son, as Bourdeaux Merchant, having helped them thither, out of some proud Manorhouse no longer weather-tight. Can any ancient person of that city give us trace of such a man? It must be inquired into. One only of Father Hoop's reminiscences we shall report, as the highest instance on record of a national virtue: At the battle of Prestonpans, a kinsman of Hoop's, a gentleman with gold rings on his fingers, stands fighting and fencing for life with a rough Highlander; the Highlander, by some clever stroke, whisks the jewelled hand clear off, and then—picks it up from the ground, sticks it in his sporran for future leisure, and fights on! The force of *vertue*[3] could no farther go.

It cannot be uninteresting to the general reader to learn, that in the last days of October, in the year of grace 1770, Denis Diderot over-ate himself (as he was in the habit of doing), at Grandval; and had an obstinate 'indigestion of bread.' He writes to Grimm that it is the worst of all indigestions: to his fair Voland that it lay more than fifteen hours on his stomach, with a weight like to crush the life out of him; would neither *remonter* nor *descendre;* nor indeed stir a hairsbreadth for warm water, *de quelque côté que je la* (the warm water) *prisse.*

Clysterium donare,
Ensuita purgare!

Such things, we grieve to say, are of frequent occurrence; the Holbachian table is all-too plenteous; there are cooks too, we know, who boast of their diabolic ability to cause the patient, by successive intensations of their art, to eat with new and ever-new

[3] *Virtus* (properly *man*liness, the chief duty of man) meant, in old Rome, *power of fighting;* means, in modern Rome, *connoisseurship;* in Scotland, *thrift.*—ED.

appetite, till he explode on the spot. Diderot writes to his fair one, that his clothes will hardly button, that he is thus 'stuffed' and thus; and so indigestion succeeds indigestion. Such Narratives fill the heart of sensibility with amazement; nor to the woes that chequer this imperfect, caco-gastric state of existence is the tear wanting.

The society of Grandval cannot be accounted very dull: nevertheless let no man regretfully compare it with any neighbourhood he may have drawn by lot, in the present day; or even with any no-neighbourhood, if that be his affliction. The gaiety at Grandval was of the kind that could not last. Were it not that some Belief is left in Mankind, how could the sport of emitting Unbelief continue? On which ground indeed, Swift, in his masterly argument 'Against abolishing the Christian Religion,' urges, not without pathos, that innumerable men of wit, enjoying a comfortable status by virtue of jokes on the Catechism, would hereby be left without pabulum, the staff of life cut away from their hand. The Holbachs were blind to this consideration; and joked away, as if it would last forever. So too with regard to Obscene Talk: where were the merit of a riotous Mother-in-law saying and doing, in public, these never-imagined scandals, had not a cunningly-devised fable of Modesty been set afloat; were there not some remnants of Modesty still extant among the unphilosophic classes? The Samoeids (according to Travellers) have few double-meanings; among stall-cattle the witty effect of such is lost altogether. Be advised, then, foolish old woman! 'Burn not thy bed;' the light of *it* will soon go out, and then?—Apart from the common household topics, which the 'daily household epochs' bring with them everywhere, two main elements, we regret to say, come to light in the conversation at Grandval; these, with a spicing of Noble-sentiment, are, unfortunately, Blasphemy and Bawdry. Whereby, at this distance, the whole matter grows to look poor and effete; and we can honestly rejoice that it all *has* been, and need not be again.

But now, hastening back to Paris, friend Diderot finds proof-sheets enough on his desk, and notes, and invitations, and applications from distressed men of letters; nevertheless runs over, in the first place, to seek news from the Voland; will then see what is to be done. He writes much; talks and visits much: besides the Savans, Artists, spiritual Notabilities, domestic or migratory, of the period, he has a liberal allowance of unnotable Associates;

especially a whole bevy of young or oldish, mostly rather spiteful Women; in whose gossip he is perfect. We hear the rustling of their silks, the clack of their pretty tongues, tittle-tattle 'like their pattens when they walk;' and the sound of it, fresh as yesterday, through this long vista of Time, has become significant, almost prophetic. Life could not hang heavy on Diderot's hands: he is a vivid, open, all-embracing creature; could have found occupation anywhere; has occupation here forced on him, enough and to spare. 'He had much to do, and did much of his own,' says Mademoiselle; 'yet three-fourths of his life were employed in helping whosoever 'had need of his purse, of his talents, of his management: his study, 'for the five-and-twenty years I knew it, was like a well-frequented 'shop, where, as one customer went, another came.' He could not find in his heart to refuse any one. He has reconciled Brothers, sought out Tutorages, settled Lawsuits; solicited Pensions; advised, and refreshed hungry Authors, instructed ignorant ones: he has written advertisements for incipient helpless Grocers; he once wrote the dedication (to a pious Duc d'Orléans) of a lampoon against himself,—and so raised some five-and-twenty gold louis for the famishing lampooner. For all these things, let not the light Diderot want his reward with us! Other reward, except from himself, he got none; but often the reverse; as in his little Drama, *La Pièce et le Prologue*, may be seen humorously and good-humouredly set forth under his own hand. Indeed, his clients, by a vast majority, were of the scoundrel species; in any case, Denis knew well, that to expect gratitude, is to deserve ingratitude.—'Rivière well contented' (hear Mademoiselle) 'now thanks my 'father, both for his services and his advices; sits chatting another 'quarter of an hour, and then takes leave; my father shows him 'down. As they are on the stairs, Rivière stops, turns round, and 'asks: "M. Diderot, are you acquainted with Natural History?"—'"Why, a little; I know an aloe from a sago, a pigeon from a 'colibri."—"Do you know the history of the *Formica-leo?*"—"No." '—"It is a little insect of great industry: it digs a hole in the 'ground like a reversed funnel; covers the top with fine light sand; 'entices foolish insects to it; takes them, sucks them, then says to 'them: M. Diderot, I have the honour to wish you good-day." My 'father stood laughing like to split at this adventure.'

Thus, amid labour and recreation; questionable Literature, unquestionable Loves; eating and digesting, better or worse; in gladness and vexation of spirit, in laughter ending in sighs, does

Diderot pass his days. He has been hard toiled, but then well lattered, and is nothing of a hypochondriac. What little service enown can do him, may now be considered as done: he is in the entre of the literature, science, art, of his nation; not numbered mong the Academical Forty, yet in his heterodox heart entitled o be almost proud of the exclusion; successful in Criticism, successful in Philosophism, nay, highest of sublunary glories, successful n the Theatre; vanity may whisper, if she please, that, excepting he unattainable Voltaire alone, he is the first of Frenchmen. High ieads are in correspondence with him the low-born; from Catherine he Empress to Philidor the Chess-player, he is in honoured relaion with all manner of men; with scientific Buffons, Eulers, D'Alemberts; with artistic Falconnets, Vanloos, Riccobonis, Garicks. He was ambitious of being a Philosophe; and now the vhole fast-growing sect of Philosophes look up to him as their iead and mystagogue. To Denis Diderot, when he stept out of the Langres Diligence at the College d'Harcourt; or afterwards, when ie walked in the subterranean shades of Rascaldom, with uneasy teps over the burning marl, a much smaller destiny would have eemed desirable.

Within doors, again, matters stand rather disjointed, as surely hey might well do: however, Madame Diderot is always true and ssiduous; if one Daughter talk enthusiastically, and at length though her father has written the *Religieuse*) die mad in a convent, he other, a quick, intelligent, graceful girl, is waxing into womanood, and takes after the father's Philosophism, leaving the mother's iety far enough aside. To which elements of mixed good and evil rom without, add this so incalculably favourable one from within, hat of all literary men Diderot is the least a self-listener; none of our puzzling, repenting, forecasting, earnest-bilious temperaments, ut sanguineous-lymphatic every fibre of him, living lightly from and to mouth, in a world mostly painted rose-colour.

The *Encyclopédie*, after nigh thirty years of endeavour, to which nly the Siege of Troy may offer some faint parallel, is finished. Scattered Compositions of all sorts, printed or manuscript, making nany Volumes, lie also finished; the Philosophe has reaped no golden harvest from them. He is getting old: can live out of debt, ut is still poor. Thinking to settle his daughter in marriage, he nust resolve to sell his Library; money is not otherwise to be aised. Here, however, the Northern Cleopatra steps imperially orward; purchases his Library for its full value; gives him a

handsome pension, as Librarian to keep it for her; and pays him moreover fifty years thereof by advance in ready-money. This we call imperial (in a world so necessitous as ours), though the whole munificence did not, we find, cost above three thousand pounds; a trifle to the Empress of All the Russias. In fact, it is about the sum your first-rate king eats, as board-wages, in one day; who, however, has seldom sufficient; not to speak of charitable overplus. In admiration of his Empress, the vivid Philosophe is now louder than ever; he even breaks forth into rather husky singing. Who shall blame him? The Northern Cleopatra (whom, in any case, he must regard with other eyes than we) has stretched out a generous helping hand to him, where otherwise there was no help, but only hindrance and injury: all men will, and should, more or less, obey the proverb, to praise the fair as their own market goes in it.

One of the last great scenes in Diderot's Life is his personal visit to this Benefactress. There is but one Letter from him with Petersburg for date, and that of ominous brevity. The Philosophe was of open, unheedful, free-and-easy disposition; Prince and Polisson were singularly alike to him; it was 'hail fellow well met,' with every Son of Adam, be his clothes of one stuff or the other. Such a man could be no court-sycophant, was ill-calculated to succeed at court. We can imagine that the Neva-colic, and the character of the Neva-water, were not the only things hurtful to his nerves there. For King Denis, who had dictated such wonderful anti-regalities in the Abbé Raynal's *History;*[4] and himself, in a moment of sibylism, emitted that surprising announcement, surpassing all yet uttered or utterable in the Tyrtæan way, how

[4] "But who *dare* stand for this?" would Diderot exclaim. "I will, I!" eagerly responded the Abbé: "do but proceed." (*A la Mémoire de Diderot*, by De Meister.)—Was the following one of the passages?

'Happily these perverse instructors' of Kings 'are chastised, sooner or later, 'by the ingratitude and contempt of their pupils. Happily, these pupils too, 'miserable in the bosom of grandeur, are tormented all their life by a deep '*ennui*, which they cannot banish from their palaces. Happily, the religious 'prejudices, which have been planted in their souls, return on them to affright 'them. Happily, the mournful silence of their people teaches them, from time 'to time, the deep hatred that is borne them. Happily, they are too cowardly 'to despise that hatred. Happily (*heureusement*), after a life which no mortal, 'not even the meanest of their subjects, would accept; if he knew all its wretch-'edness, they find black inquietude, terror and despair, seated on the pillow of 'their deathbed (*les noires inquiétudes, la terreur et le désespoir assis au chevet 'de leur lit de mort*).'—Surely, 'kings have poor times of it, to be run foul of 'by the like of thee'!

Ses mains (the freeman's) *ourderaient les entrailles du prêtre,*
Au défaut d'un cordon, pour étrangler les rois;

for such a one, the climate of the Neva must have had something oppressive in it. The *entrailles du prêtre* were, indeed, much at his service here, could he get clutch of them; but only for musical philosophe fiddle-strings; nowise for a *cordon!*

Nevertheless, Cleopatra is an uncommon woman (or rather an uncommon man), and can put-up with many things; and, in a gentle skilful way, make the crooked straight. As her Philosophe presents himself in common apparel, she sends him a splendid court-suit; and as he can now enter in a civilised manner, she sees him often, confers with him largely: by happy chance, Grimm too at length arrives; and the winter passes without accident. Returning home in triumph, he can express himself contented, charmed with his reception; has mineral specimens, and all manner of hyperborean memorials for friends; unheard-of things to tell; how he crossed the bottomless half-thawed Dwina, with the water boiling up round his wheels, the ice bending like leather, yet crackling like mere ice, —and shuddered, and got through safe; how he was carried, coach and all, into the ferry-boat at Mittau, on thirty wild men's backs, who floundered in the mud, and nigh broke his shoulder-blade; how he investigated Holland, and had conversed with Empresses, and High Mightinesses, and principalities and powers; and so seen and conquered, for his own spiritual behoof, several of the Seven Wonders.

But, alas! his health is broken; old age is knocking at the gate, like an importunate creditor, who has warrant for entering. The radiant lightly-bounding soul is now getting all dim and stiff, and heavy with sleep; Diderot too must adjust himself, for the hour draws nigh. These last years he passes retired and private, not idle or miserable. Philosophy or Philosophism has nowise lost its charm; whatsoever so much as calls itself Philosopher can interest him. Thus poor Seneca, on occasion of some new Version of his Works, having come before the public, and been roughly dealt with, Diderot, with a long, last, concentrated effort, writes his *Vie de Sénèque;* struggling to make the hollow solid. Which, alas, after all his tinkering still sounds hollow; and notable Seneca, so wistfully desirous to stand well with Truth, and yet not ill with Nero, is and remains only our perhaps niceliest-proportioned Half-and-half, the plausiblest Plausible on record; no great man, no true

man, no man at all; yet how much lovelier than such,—as the mild-spoken, tolerating, charity-sermoning, immaculate Bishop Dogbolt to some rude, self-helping, sharp-tongued Apostle Paul! Under which view, indeed, Seneca (though surely erroneously, for the origin of the thing was different) has been called, in this generation, 'the father of all such as wear shovel-hats.'

The *Vie de Sénèque*, as we said, was Diderot's last effort. It remains only to be added of him, that he too died; a lingering but quiet death, which took place on the 30th of July 1784. He once quotes from Montaigne the following, as Sceptic's viaticum: 'I 'plunge stupidly, head foremost, into this dumb Deep, which 'swallows me, and chokes me, in a moment,—full of insipidity and 'indolence. Death, which is but a quarter of an hour's suffering, 'without consequence and without injury, does not require peculiar 'precepts.' It was Diderot's allotment to die with all due 'stupidity:' he was leaning on his elbows; had eaten an apricot two minutes before, and answered his wife's remonstrances with: "*Mais que diable de mal veux-tu que cela me fasse?* (How the deuce can that hurt me?)" She spoke again, and he answered not. His House, which the curious will visit when they go to Paris, was in the Rue Taranne, at the intersection thereof with the Rue Saint-Benoît. The dust that was once his Body went to mingle with the common earth, in the church of Saint-Roch; his Life, the wondrous manifold Force that was in him, that was He,—returned to ETERNITY, and *is* there, and continues there!

Two things, as we saw, are celebrated of Diderot. First, that he had the most encyclopedical head ever seen in this world: second, that he talked as never man talked;—properly, as never man his admirers had heard, or as no man living in Paris then. That is to say, his was at once the widest, fertilest, and readiest of minds.

With regard to the Encyclopedical Head, suppose it to mean that he was of such vivacity as to admit, and look upon with interest, almost all things which the circle of Existence could offer him; in which sense, this exaggerated laudation, of Encyclopedism, is not without its fraction of meaning. Of extraordinary openness and compass we must grant the mind of Diderot to be; of a susceptibility, quick activity; even naturally of a depth, and in its practical realised shape, of a universality, which bring it into kindred with the highest order of minds. On all forms of this wondrous Creation he can look with loving wonder; whatsoever

thing stands there, has some brotherhood with him, some beauty and meaning for him. Neither is the faculty to see and interpret wanting; as, indeed, this faculty to *see* is inseparable from that other faculty to *look*, from that true wish to look; moreover (under another figure), Intellect is not a *tool*, but a *hand* that can handle any tool. Nay, in Diderot we may discern a far deeper universality than that shown, or showable, in Lebreton's *Encyclopédie;* namely, a poetical; for, in slight gleams, this too manifests itself. A universality less of the head than of the character; such, we say, is traceable in this man, at lowest the power to have acquired such. Your true Encyclopedical is the Homer, the Shakspeare; every genuine Poet is a living embodied, real Encyclopedia,—in more or fewer volumes; were his experience, his insight of details, never so limited, the whole world lies imaged as a whole within him; whosoever has not seized the whole cannot yet speak truly (much less can he speak *musically*, which is harmoniously, *concordant'y*) of any part, but will perpetually need new guidance, rectification. The fit use of such a man is as hodman; not feeling the plan of the edifice, let him carry stones to it; if he *build* the smallest stone, it is likeliest to be wrong, and cannot continue there.

But the truth is, as regards Diderot, this saying of the encyclopedical head comes mainly from his having edited a Bookseller's Encyclopedia, and can afford us little direction. Looking into the man, and omitting his trade, we find him by nature gifted in a high degree with openness and versatility, yet nowise in the highest degree; alas, in quite another degree than that. Nay, if it be meant farther that in practice, as a writer and thinker, he has taken-in the Appearances of Life and the World, and images them back with such freedom, clearness, fidelity, as we have not many times witnessed elsewhere, as we have not various times seen infinitely surpassed elsewhere,—this same encyclopedical praise must altogether be denied him. Diderot's habitual world, we must, on the contrary, say, is a half-world, distorted into looking like a whole; it is properly, a poor, fractional, insignificant world; partial, inaccurate, perverted from end to end. Alas, it was the destiny of the man to live as a Polemic; to be born also in the morning-tide and first splendour of the Mechanical Era; not to know, with the smallest assurance or continuance, that in the Universe other than a mechanical meaning could exist; which force of destiny acting on him through his whole course, we have

obtained what now stands before us: no Seer, but only possibilities of a Seer, transient irradiations of a Seer, looking through the organs of a Philosophe.

These two considerations, which indeed are properly but one (for a thinker, especially of French birth, in the Mechanical Era, could not be other than a Polemic), must never for a moment be left out of view in judging the works of Diderot. It is a great truth, one side of a great truth, that the Man makes the circumstances, and spiritually as well as economically is the artificer of his own fortune. But there is another side of the same truth, that the man's circumstances are the element he is appointed to live and work in; that he by necessity takes his complexion, vesture, embodiment, from these, and is in all practical manifestations modified by them almost without limit; so that in another no less genuine sense, it can be said Circumstances make the Man. Now, if it continually behoves us to insist on the former truth towards ourselves, it equally behoves us to bear in mind the latter when we judge of other men. The most gifted soul, appearing in France in the Eighteenth Century, can as little embody himself in the intellectual vesture of an Athenian Plato, as in the grammatical one; his thoughts can no more be Greek, than his language can. He thinks of the things belonging to the French eighteenth century, and in the dialect he has learned there; in the light, and under the conditions prescribed there. Thus, as the most original, resolute and self-directing of all the Moderns has written: 'Let a man be 'but born ten years sooner, or ten years later, his whole aspect 'and performance shall be different.'

Grant, doubtless, that a certain perennial Spirit, true for all times and all countries, can and must look through the thinking of certain men, be it in what dialect soever: understand meanwhile that strictly this holds only of the highest order of men, and cannot be exacted of inferior orders; among whom, if the most sedulous, loving inspection disclose any even secondary symptoms of such a Spirit, it ought to seem enough. Let us remember well that the high-gifted, high-striving Diderot was born in the point of Time and of Space, when of all uses he could turn himself to, of all dialects speak in, this of Polemical Philosophism, and no other, seemed the most promising and fittest. Let us remember too, that no earnest Man, in any Time, ever spoke what was wholly meaningless; that, in all human convictions, much more in all human practices, there was a true side, a fraction of truth; which

action is precisely the thing we want to extract from them, if we want anything at all to do with them.

Such palliative considerations (which, for the rest, concern not Diderot, now departed, and indifferent to them, but only ourselves who could wish to *see* him, and not to mis-see him) are essential, we say, through our whole survey of his Opinions and Proceedings, generally so alien to our own; but most of all in reference to his Head Opinion, properly the source of all the rest, and more shocking, even horrible, to us than all the rest: we mean his Atheism. David Hume, dining once in company where Diderot was, remarked that he did not think there were any Atheists. "Count us," said a certain Monsieur ——: they were eighteen. "Well," said the Monsieur ——, "it is pretty fair if you have fished-out fifteen at the first cast; and three others who know not what to think of it." In fact, the case was common: your Philosophe of the first water had grown to reckon Atheism a necessary accomplishment. Gowkthrapple Naigeon, as we saw, had made himself very perfect therein.

Diderot was an Atheist, then; stranger still, a proselytising Atheist, who esteemed the creed worth earnest reiterated preaching, and enforcement with all vigour! The unhappy man had 'sailed through the Universe of Worlds and found no Maker thereof; had descended to the abysses where Being no longer casts its shadow, and felt only the rain-drops trickle down; and seen only the gleaming rainbow of Creation, which originated from no Sun; and heard only the everlasting storm which no one governs; and looked upwards for the DIVINE EYE, and beheld only the black, bottomless, glaring DEATH'S EYE-SOCKET:' such, with all his wide voyagings, was the philosophic fortune he had realised.

Sad enough, horrible enough; yet instead of shrieking over it, or howling and Ernulphus'-cursing over it, let us, as the more profitable method, keep our composure, and inquire a little, What possibly it may mean? The whole phenomenon, as seems to us, will explain itself from the fact above insisted on, that Diderot was a Polemic of decided character, in the Mechanical Age. With great expenditure of words and froth, in arguments as waste, wild-weltering, delirious-dismal as the chaos they would demonstrate; which arguments one now knows not whether to laugh at or to weep at, and almost does both,—have Diderot and his sect perhaps made this apparent to all who examine it: That in the French System of Thought (called also the Scotch, and still familiar

enough everywhere, which for want of a better title we have named the Mechanical), there is no room for a Divinity; that to him, for whom *intellect*, or the power of knowing and believing, is still synonymous with *logic*, or the mere power of arranging and communicating, there is absolutely no proof discoverable of a Divinity; and such a man has nothing for it but either, if he be of half spirit as is the frequent case, to trim despicably all his days between two opinions; or else, if he be of whole spirit, to anchor himself on the rock or quagmire of Atheism,—and farther, should he see fit, proclaim to others that there is good riding there. So much may Diderot have demonstrated: a conclusion at which we nowise turn pale. Was it much to know that Metaphysical Speculation, by nature, whirls round in endless Mahlstroms, both 'creating and swallowing—itself'? For so wonderful a self-swallowing product of the Spirit of the Time, could any result to arrive at be fitter than this of the ETERNAL No? We thank Heaven that the result *is* finally arrived at; and so now we can look out for something other and farther. But above all things, *proof* of a God? A *probable* God! The smallest of Finites struggling to *prove* to itself, that is to say if we will consider it, to picture-out and arrange as diagram, and *include* within itself, the Highest Infinite; in *which*, by hypothesis, *it* lives, and moves, and has its being! This, we conjecture, will one day seem a much more miraculous miracle than that negative result it has arrived at,—or any other result a still absurder chance might have led it to. He who, in some singular Time of the World's History, were reduced to wander about, in stooping posture, with painfully constructed sulphur-match and farthing rushlight (as Gowkthrapple Naigeon), or smoky tar-link (as Denis Diderot), searching for the Sun, and did not find it; were *he* wonderful and his failure; or the singular Time, and its having put him on that search?

Two small consequences, then, we fancy, may have followed, or be following, from poor Diderot's Atheism. First, that all speculations of the sort we call Natural Theology, endeavouring to prove the beginning of all Belief by some Belief earlier than the beginning, are barren, ineffectual, impossible; and may, so soon as otherwise it is profitable, be abandoned. Of final causes, man, by the nature of the case, can *prove* nothing; knows them, if he know anything of them, not by glimmering flint-sparks of Logic, but by an infinitely higher light of intuition; never long, by Heaven's mercy, wholly eclipsed in the human soul; and (under the name

of Faith, as regards this matter) familiar to us now, historically or in conscious possession, for upwards of four thousand years. To all open men it will indeed always be a favourite contemplation, that of watching the ways of Being, how animate adjusts itself to inanimate, rational to irrational, and this that we name Nature is not a desolate phantasm of a chaos, but a wondrous existence and reality. If, moreover, in those same 'marks of design,' as he has called them, the contemplative man find new evidence of a designing Maker, be it well for him: meanwhile, surely one would think, the still clearer evidence lay nearer home,—in the contemplative man's own head that *seeks* after such! In which point of view our extant Natural Theologies, as our innumerable Evidences of the Christian Religion, and suchlike, may, in reference to the strange season they appear in, have a certain value, and be worth printing and reprinting; only let us understand for whom, and how, they are valuable; and be nowise wroth with the poor Atheist, whom they have not convinced, and could not, and should not convince.

The second consequence seems to be, that this whole current hypothesis of the Universe being 'a Machine,' and then of an Architect, who constructed it, sitting as it were apart, and guiding it, and *seeing* it go,—may turn-out an inanity and nonentity; not much longer tenable: with which result likewise we shall, in the quietest manner, reconcile ourselves. 'Think ye,' says Goethe, 'that 'God made the Universe, and then let it run round his finger (*am 'Finger laufen liesse*)?' On the whole, that Metaphysical hurly-burly, of our poor jarring, self-listening Time, ought at length to compose itself: that seeking for a God *there*, and not *here;* everywhere outwardly in physical Nature, and not inwardly in our own Soul, where alone He is to be found by us,—begins to get wearisome. Above all, that 'faint possible Theism,' which now forms our common English creed, cannot be too soon swept out of the world. What is the nature of that individual, who with hysterical violence theoretically asserts a God, perhaps a revealed Symbol and Worship of God; and for the rest, in thought, word and conduct, meet with him where you will, is found living as if his theory were some polite figure of speech, and his theoretical God a mere distant Simulacrum, with whom he, for his part, had nothing farther to do? Fool! The ETERNAL is no Simulacrum; God is not only There, but Here or nowhere, in that life-breath of thine, in that act and thought of thine,—and thou wert wise to

look to it. If there is no God, as the fool hath said in his heart, then live on with thy decencies, and lip-homages, and inward greed, and falsehood, and all the hollow cunningly-devised halfness that recommends thee to the Mammon of this world: if there *is* a God, we say, look to it! But in either case, what art thou? The Atheist is false; yet is there, as we see, a fraction of truth in him; he is true compared with thee; thou, unhappy mortal, livest wholly in a lie, art wholly a lie.

So that Diderot's Atheism comes, if not to much, yet to something: we learn this from it, and from what it stands connected with, and may represent for us, That the Mechanical System of Thought is, in its essence, Atheistic; that whosoever will admit no organ of truth but logic, and nothing to exist but what can be argued of, must even content himself with this sad result, as the only solid one he can arrive at; and so with the best grace he can, 'of the æther make a gas, of God a force, of the second world a 'coffin;' of man an aimless nondescript, 'little better than a kind 'of vermin.' If Diderot, by bringing matters to this parting of the roads, have enabled or helped us to strike into the truer and better road, let him have our thanks for it. As to what remains, be pity our only feeling; was not his creed miserable enough; nay, moreover, did not he bear its miserableness, so to speak, in our stead, so that it need now be no longer borne by any one?

In this same for him unavoidable circumstance, of the age he lived in, and the system of thought universal then, will be found the key to Diderot's whole spiritual character and procedure; the excuse for much in him that to us is false and perverted. Beyond the meagre 'rushlight of closet-logic,' Diderot recognised no guidance. That 'the Highest cannot be spoken of in words,' was a truth he had not dreamt of. Whatsoever thing he cannot debate of, we might almost say measure and weigh, and carry off with him to be eaten and enjoyed, is simply not there for him. He dwelt all his days in the 'thin rind of the Conscious;' the deep fathomless domain of the Unconscious, whereon the other rests and has its meaning, was not, under any shape, surmised by him. Thus must the Sanctuary of Man's Soul stand perennially shut against this man; where his hand ceased to grope, the World ended: within such strait conditions had he to live and labour. And naturally to distort and dislocate, more or less, all things he laboured on: for whosoever, in one way or another, recognises not that 'Divine Idea of the World, which lies at the bottom of Appearances,' can rightly

interpret no Appearance; and whatsoever spiritual thing he does, must do it partially, do it falsely.

Mournful enough, accordingly, is the account which Diderot has given himself of Man's Existence; on the duties, relations, possessions whereof he had been a sedulous thinker. In every conclusion we have this fact of his Mechanical culture. Coupled too with another fact honourable to him: that he stuck not at half measures; but resolutely drove-on to the result, and held by it. So that we cannot call him a Sceptic; he has merited the more decisive name of Denier. He may be said to have denied that there was any the smallest Sacredness in Man, or in the Universe; and to have both speculated and lived on this singular footing. We behold in him the notable extreme of a man guiding himself with the least spiritual Belief that thinking man perhaps ever had. Religion, in all recognisable shapes and senses, he has done what man can do to clear out of him. He believes that pleasure is pleasant; that a lie is unbelievable; and there his *credo* terminates; nay there, what perhaps makes his case almost unique, his very fancy seems to fall silent.

For a consequent man, all possible spiritual perversions are included under that grossest one of 'proselytising Atheism;' the rest, of what kind and degree soever, cannot any longer astonish us. Diderot has them of all kinds and degrees: indeed, we might say, the French Philosophe (take him at his *word*, for inwardly much that was foreign adhered to him, do what he could) has emitted a Scheme of the World, to which all that Oriental Mullah, Bonze or Talapoin have done in that kind is poor and feeble. Omitting his whole unparalleled Cosmogonies and Physiologies; coming to his much milder Tables of the Moral Law, we shall glance here but at one minor external item, the relation between man and man; and at only one branch of this, and with all slightness, the relation of covenants; for example, the most important of these, Marriage.

Diderot has convinced himself, and indeed, as above became plain enough, acts on the conviction, that Marriage, contract it, solemnise it in what way you will, involves a solecism which reduces the amount of it to simple zero. It is a suicidal covenant; annuls itself in the very forming. 'Thou makest a vow,' says he, twice or thrice, as if the argument were a clencher, 'thou makest 'a vow of eternal constancy under a rock, which is even then crum-'bling away.' True, O Denis! the rock crumbles away: all things are changing; man changes faster than most of them. That, in

the mean while, an Unchangeable lies under all this, and looks forth, solemn and benign, through the whole destiny and workings of man, is another truth; which no Mechanical Philosophe, in the dust of his logic-mill, can be expected to grind-out for himself. Man changes, and will change: the question then arises, Is it wise in him to tumble forth, in headlong obedience to this love of change; is it so much as possible for him? Among the dualisms of man's wholly dualistic nature, this we might fancy was an observable one: that along with his unceasing tendency to change, there is a no less ineradicable tendency to persevere. Were man only here to change, let him, far from marrying, cease even to hedge-in fields, and plough them; before the autumn season, he may have lost the whim of reaping them. Let him return to the nomadic state, and set his house on wheels; nay there too a certain restraint must curb his love of change, or his cattle will perish by incessant driving, without grazing in the intervals. O Denis, what things thou babblest, in thy sleep! How, in this world of perpetual flux, shall man secure himself the smallest foundation, except hereby alone: that he take preassurance of his Fate; that in this and the other high act of his life, his Will, with all solemnity, *abdicate* its right to change; voluntarily become involuntary, and say once for all, Be there then no farther dubitation on it! Nay, the poor unheroic craftsman; that very stocking-weaver, on whose loom thou now as amateur weavest: must not even he do as much,—when he signed his apprentice-indentures? The fool! who had such a relish in himself for all things, for kingship and emperorship; yet made a vow (under a penalty of death by hunger) of eternal constancy to stocking-weaving. Yet otherwise, were no thriving craftsmen possible; only botchers, bunglers, transitory nondescripts; unfed, mostly gallows-feeding. But, on the whole, what feeling it was in the ancient devout deep soul, which of Marriage made *a Sacrament:* this, of all things in the world, is what Denis will think of for æons, without discovering. Unless, perhaps, it were to increase the vestry-fees?

Indeed, it must be granted, nothing yet seen or dreamt of can surpass the liberality of friend Denis as *magister morum;* nay, often our poor Philosophe feels called on, in an age of such Spartan rigour, to step forth into the public Stews, and emit his inspiriting *Macte virtute!* there. Whither let the curious in such matters follow him: we, having work elsewhere, wish him 'good journey,' —or rather 'safe return.' Of Diderot's indelicacy and indecency

there is for us but little to say. Diderot is not what we call indelicate and indecent; he is utterly unclean, scandalous, shameless, sansculottic-samoeidic. To declare with lyric fury that this is wrong; or with historic calmness, that a pig of sensibility would go distracted did you accuse him of it, may, especially in countries where 'indecent exposure' is cognisable at police-offices, be considered superfluous. The only question is one in Natural History: Whence comes it? What may a man, not otherwise without elevation of mind, of kindly character, of immense professed philanthropy, and doubtless of extraordinary insight, mean thereby? To us it is but another illustration of the fearless, all-for-logic, thoroughly consistent, Mechanical Thinker. It coheres well enough with Diderot's theory of man; that there is nothing of sacred either in man or around man; and that chimeras are chimerical. How shall he for whom nothing, that cannot be jargoned of in debating-clubs, exists, have any faintest forecast of the depth, significance, divineness of SILENCE; of the sacredness of 'Secrets known to all'?

Nevertheless, Nature is great; and Denis was among her nobler productions. To a soul of his sort something like what we call Conscience could nowise be wanting: the feeling of Moral Relation; of the Infinite character thereof, as the essence and soul of all else that can be felt or known, must needs assert itself in him. Yet how assert itself? An Infinitude to one in whose whole Synopsis of the Universe no Infinite stands marked? Wonderful enough is Diderot's method; and yet not wonderful, for we see it, and have always seen it, daily. Since there is nothing sacred in the Universe, whence this sacredness of what you call Virtue? Whence or how comes it that you, Denis Diderot, *must* not do a wrong thing; could not, without some qualm, speak, for example, one Lie, to gain Mahomet's Paradise with all its houris? There is no resource for it, but to get into that interminable ravelment of Reward and Approval, virtue being its own reward; and assert louder and louder,—contrary to the stern experience of all men, from the Divine Man, expiring with agony of bloody sweat on the accursed tree, down to us two, O reader (if we have ever done one Duty),—that Virtue is synonymous with Pleasure. Alas! was Paul, an Apostle of the Gentiles, virtuous; and was virtue its own reward, when *his* approving conscience told him that he was 'the chief of sinners,' and if bounded to this life alone, 'of all men the most miserable'? Or has that same so sublime Virtue, at bottom, little to do with Pleasure, if with far other things? Are Eudoxia, and

Eusebeia, and Euthanasia, and all the rest of them, of small account to Eubosia and Eupepsia; and the pains of any moderately-paced Career of Vice, Denis himself being judge, as a drop in the bucket to the 'Career of Indigestions'? This is what Denis never in this world will grant.

But what, then, will he do? One of two things: admit, with Grimm, that there are 'two justices,'—which may be called by many handsome names, but properly are nothing but the pleasant justice, and the unpleasant; whereof only the former is binding! Herein, however, Nature has been unkind to Denis; he is not a literary court-toadeater; but a free, genial, even poetic creature. There remains, therefore, nothing but the second expedient: to 'assert louder and louder;' in other words, to become a Philosophe-Sentimentalist. Most wearisome, accordingly, is the perpetual clatter kept up here about *vertu, honnêteté, grandeur, sensibilité, âmes nobles;* how unspeakably good it is to be virtuous, how pleasant, how sublime:—In the Devil and his grandmother's name, *be* virtuous; and let us have an end of it! In such sort (we will, nevertheless, joyfully recognise) does great Nature in spite of all contradictions, declare her royalty, her divineness; and, for the poor Mechanical Philosophe, has prepared, since the substance is hidden from him, a shadow wherewith he can be cheered.

In fine, to our ill-starred Mechanical Philosophe-Sentimentalist, with his loud preaching and rather poor performing, shall we not, in various respects, 'thankfully stretch-out the hand'? In all ways 'it was necessary that the logical side of things should likewise be made available.' On the whole, wondrous higher developments of much, of Morality among the rest, are visible in the course of the world's doings, at this day. A plausible prediction were that the Ascetic System is not to regain its exclusive dominancy. Ever, indeed, must Self-denial, '*Annihilation of Self*,' be the beginning of all moral action: meanwhile, he that looks well, may discern filaments of a nobler System, wherein this lies included as one harmonious element. Who knows, for example, what new unfoldings and complex adjustments await us, before the true relation of moral Greatness to moral Correctness, and their proportional value, can be established? How, again, is perfect tolerance for the Wrong to coexist with ever-present conviction that Right stands related to it, as a God does to a Devil,—an Infinite to an opposite Infinite? How, in a word, through what tumultuous vicissitudes, after how many false partial efforts, deepening the

confusion, shall it at length be made manifest, and kept continually manifest, to the hearts of men, that the Good is not properly the highest, but the Beautiful; that the true Beautiful (differing from the false, as Heaven does from Vauxhall) comprehends in it the Good?—In some future century, it may be found that Denis Diderot, acting and professing, in wholeness and with full conviction, what the immense multitude act in halfness and without conviction, has, though by strange inverse methods, forwarded the result. It was long ago written, the Omnipotent 'maketh the wrath of the wicked,' the folly of the foolish, 'to praise Him.' In any case, Diderot acted it, and not we; Diderot bears it, and not we: peace be with Diderot!

The other branch of his renown is excellence as a Talker. Or in wider view, think his admirers, his philosophy was not more surpassing than his delivery thereof. What his philosophy amounts to, we have been examining: but now, that in this other conversational province he was eminent, is easily believed. A frank, ever-hoping, social character; a mind full of knowledge, full of fervour; of great compass, of great depth, ever on the alert: such a man could not have other than a 'mouth of gold.' It is still plain, whatsoever thing imaged itself before him was imaged in the most lucent clearness; was rendered back, with light labour, in corresponding clearness. Whether, at the same time, Diderot's conversation, relatively so superior, deserved the intrinsic character of supreme, may admit of question. The worth of words spoken depends, after all, on the wisdom that resides in them; and in Diderot's words there was often too little of this. Vivacity, far-darting brilliancy, keenness of theoretic vision, paradoxical ingenuity, gaiety, even touches of humour; all this must have been here: whosoever had preferred sincerity, earnestness, depth of practical rather than theoretic insight, with not less of impetuosity, of clearness and sureness, with humour, emphasis, or such other melody or rhythm as that utterance demanded,—must have come over to London; and, with forbearant submissiveness, listened to our Johnson. Had we the stronger man, then? Be it rather, as in that duel of Cœur-de-Lion with the light, nimble, yet also invincible Saladin, that each nation had the strength which most befitted it.

Closely connected with this power of conversation is Diderot's facility of composition. A talent much celebrated; numerous really surprising proofs whereof are on record: how he wrote long

works within the week; sometimes within almost the four-and-twenty hours. Unhappily, enough still remains to make such feats credible. Most of Diderot's Works bear the clearest traces of extemporaneousness; *stans pede in uno!* They are much liker printed talk, than the concentrated well-considered utterance which, from a man of that weight, we expect to see set in types. It is said, 'he wrote good pages, but could not write a good book.' Substitute *did not* for *could not;* and there is truth in the saying. Clearness, as has been observed, comprehensibility at a glance, is the character of whatever Diderot wrote: a clearness which, in visual objects, rises into the region of the Artistic, and resembles that of Richardson or Defoe. Yet, grant that he makes his meaning clear, what is the nature of that meaning itself? Alas, for most part, only a hasty, flimsy, superficial meaning, with gleams of a deeper vision peering through. More or less of disorder reigns in all Works that Diderot wrote; not order, but the plausible appearance of such: the true heart of the matter is not found; 'he skips deftly along the radii, and skips over the centre, and 'misses it.'

Thus may Diderot's admired Universality and admired Facility have both turned to disadvantage for him. We speak not of his reception by the world: this indeed is the 'age of specialties;' yet, owing to other causes, Diderot the Encyclopedist had success enough. But, what is of far more importance, his inward growth was marred: the strong tree shot not up in any one noble stem, bearing boughs and fruit, and shade all round; but spread out horizontally, after a very moderate height, into innumerable branches, not useless, yet of quite secondary use. Diderot could have been an Artist; and he was little better than an Encyclopedic Artisan. No smatterer, indeed; a faithful artisan; of really universal equipment, in his sort: he did the work of many men; yet nothing, or little, which many could not have done.

Accordingly, his Literary Works, now lying finished some fifty years, have already, to the most surprising degree, shrunk in importance. Perhaps no man so much talked of is so little known; to the great majority he is no longer a Reality, but a Hearsay. Such, indeed, partly is the natural fate of Works Polemical, which almost all Diderot's are. The Polemic annihilates his opponent; but in so doing annihilates himself too, and both are swept away to make room for something other and farther. Add to this, the slight-textured transitory character of Diderot's style; and the fact

is well enough explained. Meanwhile, let him to whom it applies consider it; him among whose gifts it was to rise into the Perennial, and who dwelt rather low down in the Ephemeral, and ephemerally fought and scrambled there! Diderot the great has contracted into Diderot the easily-measurable: so must it be with others of the like.

In how many sentences can the net-product of all that tumultuous Atheism, printed over many volumes, be comprised! Nay, the whole *Encyclopédie*, that world's wonder of the eighteenth century, the Belus' Tower of an age of refined Illumination, what has it become? Alas, no stone tower, that will stand there as our strength and defence through all times; but, at best, a wooden *Helepolis* (City-taker), wherein stationed, the Philosophus Policaster has burnt and battered down many an old ruinous Sorbonne; and which now, when that work is pretty well over, may, in turn, be taken asunder, and used as firewood. The famed Encyclopedical Tree itself has proved an artificial one, and borne no fruit. We mean that, in its nature, it is mechanical only; one of those attempts to parcel-out the invisible mystical Soul of Man, with its *infinitude* of phases and character, into shop-lists of what are called 'faculties,' 'motives,' and suchlike; which attempts may indeed be made with all degrees of insight, from that of a Dr. Spurzheim to that of Denis Diderot or Jeremy Bentham; and prove useful for a day, but for a day only.

Nevertheless it were false to regard Diderot as a Mechanist and nothing more; as one working and grinding blindly in the mill of mechanical Logic, joyful with his lot there, and unconscious of any other. Call him one rather who contributed to deliver us therefrom: both by his manful whole spirit as a Mechanist, which drove all things to their ultimatum and crisis; and even by a dim-struggling faculty, which virtually aimed beyond this. Diderot, we said, was gifted by Nature for an Artist: strangely flashing through his mechanical encumbrances, are rays of thought, which belong to the Poet, to the Prophet; which, in other environment, could have revealed the deepest to us. Not to seek far, consider this one little sentence, which he makes the last of the dying Sanderson: '*Le temps, la matière et l'espace ne sont peut-être qu'un point* (Time, Matter and Space are perhaps but a *point*)!'

So too in Art, both as a speaker and a doer, he is to be reckoned as one of those who pressed forward irresistibly out of the artificial barren sphere of that time, into a truer genial one. His Dramas,

the *Fils Naturel*, the *Père de Famille*, have indeed ceased to live; yet is the attempt towards great things visible in them; the attempt remains to us, and seeks otherwise, and has found, and is finding, fulfilment. Not less in his *Salons* (Judgments of Art-Exhibitions), written hastily for Grimm, and by ill chance on artists of quite secondary character, do we find the freest recognition of whatever excellence there is; nay an impetuous endeavour, not critically, but even creatively, towards something more excellent. Indeed, what with their unrivalled clearness, painting the picture over again for us, so that we too *see* it, and can judge it; what with their sunny fervour, inventiveness, real artistic genius, which wants nothing but a *hand*, they are, with some few exceptions in the German tongue, the only Pictorial Criticisms we know of worth reading. Here too, as by his own practice in the Dramatic branch of art, Diderot stands forth as the main originator, almost the sole one in his own country, of that many-sided struggle towards what is called Nature, and copying of Nature, and faithfulness to Nature: a deep indispensable truth, subversive of the old error; yet under that figure, only a half-truth, for Art too is Art, as surely as Nature is Nature; which struggle, meanwhile, either as half-truth, or working itself into a whole truth, may be seen, in countries that have any Art, still forming the tendency of all artistic endeavour. In which sense, Diderot's *Essay on Painting* has been judged worth translation by the greatest modern Judge of Art, and greatest modern Artist, in the highest kind of Art; and may be read anew, with argumentative commentary and exposition, in *Goethe's Works*.

Nay, let us grant, with pleasure, that for Diderot himself the realms of Art were not wholly unvisited; that he too, so heavily imprisoned, stole Promethean fire. Among these multitudinous, most miscellaneous Writings of his, in great part a manufactured farrago of Philosophism no longer saleable, and now looking melancholy enough,—are two that we can almost call Poems; that have something perennially poetic in them: *Jacques le Fataliste*; in a still higher degree, the *Neveu de Rameau*. The occasional *blueness* of both; even that darkest indigo in some parts of the former, shall not altogether affright us. As it were, a loose straggling sunbeam flies here over Man's Existence in France, now nigh a century behind us: 'from the height of luxurious elegance to the depths of shamelessness,' all is here. Slack, careless seems the combination of the picture; wriggling, disjointed, like a bundle of

flails; yet strangely united in the painter's inward unconscious feeling. Wearisomely crackling wit gets silent; a grim, taciturn, dare-devil, almost Hogarthian humour rises in the back-ground. Like this there is nothing that we know of in the whole range of French literature: La Fontaine is shallow in comparison; the La Bruyère wit-species not to be named. It resembles *Don Quixote* rather; of somewhat similar stature; yet of complexion altogether different; through the one looks a sunny Elysium, through the other a sulphurous Erebus: both hold of the Infinite. This *Jacques*, perhaps, was not quite so hastily put together: yet there too haste is manifest: the Author finishes it off, not by working-out the figures and movements, but by dashing his brush against the canvas; a manœuvre which in this case has not succeeded. The *Rameau's Nephew*, which is the shorter, is also the better; may pass for decidedly the best of all Diderot's compositions. It looks like a Sibylline utterance from a heart all in fusion: no ephemeral thing (for it was written as a Satire on Palissot) was ever more perennially treated. Strangely enough too, it lay some fifty years in German and Russian Libraries; came out first in the masterly version of Goethe, in 1805: and only (after a deceptive *re*-translation by a M. Saur, a courageous mystifier otherwise) reached the Paris public in 1821,—when perhaps *all* for whom and against whom it was written were no more!—It is a farce-tragedy; and its fate has corresponded to its purport. One day it must also be translated into English; but will require to be done by *head;* the common steam-machinery will not properly suffice for it.

We here (*con la bocca dolce*) take leave of Diderot in his intellectual aspect, as Artist and Thinker: a richly endowed, unfavourably situated nature; whose effort, much marred, yet not without fidelity of aim, can triumph, on rare occasions; and is perhaps nowhere utterly fruitless. In the moral aspect, as Man, he makes a somewhat similar figure; as indeed, in all men, in him especially, the Opinion and the Practice stand closely united; and as a wise man has remarked, 'the speculative principles are often but a 'supplement (or excuse) to the practical manner of life.' In conduct, Diderot can nowise seem admirable to us; yet neither inexcusable; on the whole, not at all quite worthless. Lavater traced in his physiognomy 'something timorous;' which reading his friends admitted to be a correct one. Diderot, in truth, is no hero: the earnest soul, wayfaring and warfaring in the complexities

of a World like to overwhelm him, yet wherein he by Heaven's grace will keep faithfully warfaring, prevailing or not, can derive small solacement from this light, fluctuating, not to say flimsy existence of Diderot: no Gospel in that kind has he left us. The man, in fact, with all his high gifts, had rather a female character. Susceptible, sensitive, living by impulses, which at best he had *fashioned* into some show of principles; with vehemence enough, with even a female uncontrollableness; with little of manful steadfastness, considerateness, invincibility. Thus, too, we find him living mostly in the society of women, or of men who, like women, flattered him, and made life easy for him; recoiling with horror from an earnest Jean Jacques, who understood not the science of walking in a vain show; but imagined, poor man, that truth was there as a thing to be told, as a thing to be acted.

We call Diderot, then, not a coward; yet not in any sense a brave man. Neither towards himself, nor towards others, was he brave. All the virtues, says M. de Meister, which require not 'a great *suite* (sequency) of ideas' were his; all that do require such a *suite* were not his. In other words, what duties were easy for him he did: happily Nature had rendered several easy. His spiritual aim, moreover, seemed not so much to be enforcement, exposition of Duty, as discovery of a Duty-made-easy. Natural enough that he should strike into that province of *sentiment*, *cœur noble* and so forth. Alas, to declare that the beauty of virtue is beautiful, costs comparatively little: to win it, and wear it, is quite another enterprise,—wherein the loud braggart, we know, is not the likeliest to succeed. On the whole, peace be with *sentiment*, for that also lies behind us!—For the rest, as hinted, what duties were difficult our Diderot left undone. How should he, the *cœur sensible*, front such a monster as Pain? And now, since misgivings cannot fail in that course, what is to be done but fill-up all asperities with floods of *sensibilité*, and so voyage more or less smoothly along? *Est-il bon? Est-il méchant?* is his own account of himself. At all events, he was no voluntary hypocrite; that great praise can be given him. And thus with Mechanical Philosophism, and *passion vive;* working, flirting; 'with more of 'softness than of true affection, sometimes with the malice and 'rage of a child, but on the whole an inexhaustible fund of good-'natured simplicity,' has he come down to us, for better or worse: and what can we do but receive him?—

If now we and our reader, reinterpreting for our present want

ife and Performance of Diderot, have brought it clearer us, be the hour spent thereon, were it even more wearisome, fitless one! Have we not striven to unite our own brief t moment more and more compactly with the Past and with ıture; have we not done what lay at our hand towards ıg that same Memoirism of the Eighteenth Century into y, and 'weaving' a thread or two thereof nearer to the on of a web?

finally, if we rise with this matter, as we should try to do ll matters, into the proper region of Universal History, and n it with the eye not of this time or of that time, but of at large, perhaps the prediction might stand here, That ically, essentially little lies in it; that one day when the ult of our European way of life comes to be summed-up, hole as yet so boundless concern of French Philosophism will e into the thinnest of fractions, or vanish into nonentity! vhile the rude History and Thoughts of those same '*Juifs bles*,' the barbaric Warsong of a Deborah and Barak, the rophetic Utterance of an unkempt Isaiah, last now, with t significance, say only these three thousand years,—what ıe thrice-resplendent *Encyclopédie* shrivelled into within threescore! This is a fact which, explain it, express it, in way he will, your Encyclopedist should actually consider. were tones caught from the sacred Melody of the All, and ıarmony and meaning forever; *these* of his are but outer ls, and their jangling dies away without result. 'The ıl, sole and deepest theme of the World's and Man's History,' ıe Thinker of our time, 'whereto all other themes are sub- ated, remains the Conflict of UNBELIEF and BELIEF. All ıs wherein Belief prevails, under what form it may, are did, heart-elevating, fruitful for contemporaries and posterity. pochs, on the contrary, wherein Unbelief, under what form r, maintains its sorry victory, should they even for a moment r with a sham splendour, vanish from the eyes of posterity; ıse no one chooses to burden himself with study of the itful.'

COUNT CAGLIOSTRO.

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IN TWO FLIGHTS.[1]

[1833.]

FLIGHT FIRST.

'THE life of every man,' says our friend Herr Sauerteig, 'the 'life even of the meanest man, it were good to remember, is a 'Poem; perfect in all manner of Aristotelean requisites; with 'beginning, middle and end; with perplexities, and solutions; 'with its Will-strength (*Willenkraft*) and warfare against Fate, its 'elegy and battle-singing, courage marred by crime, everywhere 'the two tragic elements of Pity and Fear; above all, with super-'natural machinery enough,—for was not the man *born* out of 'NONENTITY; did he not *die*, and miraculously vanishing return 'thither? The most indubitable Poem! Nay, whoso will, may 'he not name it a Prophecy, or whatever else is highest in his 'vocabulary; since only in Reality lies the essence and foundation 'of all that was ever fabled, visioned, sung, spoken, or babbled by 'the human species; and the actual Life of Man includes in it all 'Revelations, true and false, that have been, are, or are to be. 'Man! I say therefore, *reverence thy fellow-man.* He too issued 'from Above; is mystical and supernatural (as thou namest it): 'this know thou of a truth. Seeing also that we ourselves are 'of so high Authorship, is not that, in very deed, "the highest 'Reverence," and most needful for us: "Reverence for oneself"?

'Thus, to my view, is every Life, more properly is every Man 'that has life to lead, a small strophe, or occasional verse, com-'posed by the Supernatural Powers; and published, in such type 'and shape, with such embellishments, emblematic head-piece and 'tail-piece as thou seest, to the thinking or unthinking Universe.

[1] FRASER'S MAGAZINE, Nos. 43, 44 (July and August).

'Heroic strophes some few are; full of force and a sacred fire, so 'that to latest ages the hearts of those that read therein are made 'to tingle. Jeremiads others seem; mere weeping laments, har- 'monious or disharmonious Remonstrances against Destiny; where- 'at we too may sometimes profitably weep. Again, have we not 'flesh-and-blood strophes of the idyllic sort,—though in these days 'rarely, owing to Poor-Laws, Game-Laws, Population-Theories and 'the like! Farther, of the comic laughter-loving sort; yet ever 'with an unfathomable earnestness, as is fit, lying underneath: 'for, bethink thee, what is the mirthfulest grinning face of any 'Grimaldi, but a transitory *mask*, behind which quite otherwise 'grins—the most indubitable *Death's-head!* However, I say farther, 'there are strophes of the pastoral sort (as in Ettrick, Afghaunistan, 'and elsewhere); of the farcic-tragic, melodramatic, of all named 'and a thousand unnamable sorts there are poetic strophes, written, 'as was said, in Heaven, printed on Earth, and published (bound in 'woollen cloth, or *clothes*) for the use of the studious. Finally, a 'small number seem utter Pasquils, mere ribald libels on Humanity: 'these too, however, are at times worth reading.

'In this wise,' continues our too obscure friend, 'out of all 'imaginable elements, awakening all imaginable moods of heart and 'soul, "barbarous enough to excite, tender enough to assuage," 'ever contradictory yet ever coalescing, is that mighty world-old 'Rhapsodia of Existence page after page (generation after gene- 'ration), and chapter (or epoch) after chapter, poetically put to- 'gether! This is what some one names "the grand sacred Epos, 'or Bible of World-History; infinite in meaning as the Divine 'Mind it emblems; wherein he is wise that can read here a line, 'and there a line."

'Remark too, under another aspect, whether it is not in this 'same Bible of World-History that all men, in all times, with or 'without clear consciousness, have been unwearied to read, what 'we may call *read;* and again to write, or rather to be *written!* 'What is all History, and all Poesy, but a deciphering somewhat 'thereof, out of that mystic heaven-written Sanscrit; and rendering 'it into the speech of men? *Know thyself*, value thyself, is a 'moralist's commandment (which I only half approve of); but '*Know others*, value others, is the hest of Nature herself. Or 'again, *Work while it is called Today:* is not that also the 'irreversible law of being for mortal man? And now, what is all 'working, and what is all knowing, but a faint interpreting and a

int showing-forth of that same *Mystery of Life*, which ever emains infinite,—heaven-written mystic Sanscrit? View it as e will, to him that lives, Life is a divine matter; felt to be of uite sacred significance. Consider the wretchedest "straddling iped that wears breeches" of thy acquaintance; into whose ool-head, Thought, as thou rashly supposest, never entered; ho, in froth-element of business, pleasure, or what else he names t, walks forever in a vain show; asking not Whence, or Why, or Whither; looking up to the Heaven above as if some upholsterer ad made it, and down to the Hell beneath as if *he* had neither art nor lot there: yet tell me, does not he too, over and above is five finite senses, acknowledge some sixth *infinite* sense, were t only that of Vanity? For, sate him in the other five as you ay, will this sixth sense leave him rest? Does he not rise arly and sit late, and study impromptus, and (in constitutional ountries) parliamentary motions, and bursts of eloquence, and ird himself in whalebone, and pad himself and perk himself, and n all ways painfully take heed to his goings; feeling (if we nust admit it) that an altogether infinite endowment has been ntrusted him also, namely, a Life to lead? Thus does he too, vith his whole force, in his own way, proclaim that the world-old Rhapsodia of Existence is divine, and an inspired Bible; and, imself a wondrous *verse* therein (be it heroic, be it pasquillic), tudy with his whole soul, as we said, both to *read* and to *be vritten!*

'Here also I will observe, that the *manner* in which men read his same Bible is, like all else, proportionate to their stage of cul- ure, to the circumstances of their environment. First, and among he earnest Oriental nations, it was read wholly like a Sacred Book; most clearly by the most earnest, those wondrous Hebrew Readers; whose reading accordingly was itself sacred, has meaning or all tribes of mortal men; since ever, to the latest generation of the world, a true utterance from the innermost of man's being will speak significantly to man. But, again, in how different a style was that other Oriental reading of the Magi; of Zerdusht, or whoever it was that first so opened the matter? Gorgeous semi- sensual Grandeurs and Splendours: on infinite darkness, brightest- glowing light and fire;—of which, all defaced by Time, and turned mostly into lies, a quite late reflex, in those Arabian Tales and the like, still leads captive every heart. Look, thirdly, at the earnest West, and that Consecration of the Flesh, which stept

'forth life-lusty, radiant, smiling-earnest, in immortal grace, from 'under the chisel and the stylus of old Greece. Here too was 'the Infinite intelligibly proclaimed as infinite: and the antique 'man walked between a Tartarus and an Elysium, his brilliant 'Paphos-islet of Existence embraced by boundless oceans of sadness 'and fateful gloom.—Of which three antique manners of reading, 'our modern manner, you will remark, has been little more than 'imitation: for always, indeed, the West has been rifer of doers 'than of speakers. The Hebrew manner has had its echo in our 'Pulpits and choral aisles; the Ethnic Greek and Arabian in 'numberless mountains of Fiction, rhymed, rhymeless, published by 'subscription, by puffery, in periodicals, or by money of your own '(*durch eignes Geld*). Till now at last, by dint of iteration and 'reiteration through some ten centuries, all these manners have 'grown obsolete, wearisome, meaningless; listened to only as the 'monotonous moaning wind, while there is nothing else to listen 'to:—and so now, well-nigh in total oblivion of the Infinitude of 'Life (except what small *unconscious* recognition the "straddling 'biped" above argued of may have), we wait, in hope and patience, 'for some *fourth* manner of anew convincingly announcing it.'

These singular sentences from the *Æsthetische Springwurzeln* we have thought right to translate and quote, by way of proem and apology. We are here about to give some critical account of what Herr Sauerteig would call a 'flesh-and-blood Poem of the purest Pasquil sort;' in plain words, to examine the biography of the most perfect scoundrel that in these latter ages has marked the world's history. Pasquils too, says Sauerteig, 'are at times worth reading.' Or quitting that mystic dialect of his, may we not assert in our own way, that the history of an Original Man is always worth knowing? So magnificent a thing is Will incarnated in a creature of like fashion with ourselves, we run to witness *all* manifestations thereof: what man soever has marked out a peculiar path of life for himself, let it lead this way or that way, and successfully travelled the same, of him we specially inquire, How he travelled; What befell him on the journey? Though the man were a knave of the first water, this hinders not the question, How he managed his knavery? Nay it rather encourages such question; for nothing properly is wholly despicable, at once detestable and forgetable, but your half-knave, he who is neither true nor false; who never in his existence once spoke or did any true thing (for indeed his mind lives in twilight, with cat-vision, incapable of *discerning* truth); and

it had not the manfulness to speak or act any decided lie; but ient his whole life in plastering together the True and the False, id therefrom manufacturing the Plausible. Such a one our ranscendentals have defined as a Moral Hybrid and chimera; ierefore, under the moral point of view, as an Impossibility, and ere deceptive Nonentity,—put together for commercial purposes. f which sort, nevertheless, how many millions, through all manner gradations, from the wielder of kings' sceptres to the vender of imstone matches, at tea-tables, council-tables, behind shop- unters, in priests' pulpits, incessantly and everywhere, do now, in iis world of ours, in this Isle of ours, offer themselves to view!

From such, at least from this intolerable over-proportion of such, ight the merciful Heavens one day deliver us! Glorious, heroic, uitful for his own Time, and for all Time and all Eternity, is the instant Speaker and Doer of Truth! If no such again, in the esent generation, is to be vouchsafed us, let us have at least the elancholy pleasure of beholding a decided Liar. Wretched mortal, ho with a single eye to be 'respectable' forever sittest cobbling gether two Inconsistencies, which stick not for an hour, but quire ever new gluten and labour,—will it, by no length of perience, no bounty of Time or Chance, be revealed to thee that ruth is of Heaven, and Falsehood is of Hell; that if thou cast not om thee the one or the other, thy existence is wholly an Illusion nd optical and tactual Phantasm; that properly thou existest not t all? Respectable! What, in the Devil's name, is the use of espectability, with never so many gigs and silver spoons, if thou nwardly art the pitifulest of all men? I would thou wert either old or hot.

One such desirable second-best, perhaps the chief of all such, we ave here found in the Count Alessandro di Cagliostro, Pupil of ie Sage Althotas, Foster-child of the Scherif of Mecca, probable on of the last King of Trebisond; named also Acharat, and Unfortunate Child of Nature; by profession healer of diseases, bolisher of wrinkles, friend of the poor and impotent, grand-master f the Egyptian Mason-lodge of High Science, Spirit-summoner, Gold-cook, Grand Cophta, Prophet, Priest, and thaumaturgic ioralist and swindler; really a Liar of the first magnitude, orough-paced in all provinces of lying, what one may call the ing of Liars. Mendez Pinto, Baron Münchausen and others are elebrated in this art, and not without some colour of justice; et must it in candour remain doubtful whether any of these

comparatively were much more than liars from the teeth onwards: a perfect character of the species in question, who lied not in word only, nor in act and word only, but continually, in thought, word and act; and, so to speak, lived wholly in an element of lying, and from birth to death did nothing but lie,—was still a desideratum. Of which desideratum Count Alessandro offers, we say, if not the fulfilment, perhaps as near an approach to it as the limited human faculties permit. Not in the modern ages, probably not in the ancient (though these had their Autolycus, their Apollonius, and enough else), did any completer figure of this sort issue out of Chaos and Old Night: a sublime kind of figure, presenting himself with 'the air of calm strength,' of sure perfection in his art; whom the heart opens itself to, with wonder and a sort of welcome. 'The only vice I know,' says one, 'is Inconsistency.' At lowest, answer we, he that *does* his work shall have his work judged of. Indeed, if Satan himself has in these days become a poetic hero, why should not Cagliostro, for some short hour, be a prose one? 'One first 'question,' says a great Philosopher, 'I ask of every man: Has he 'an aim, which with undivided soul he follows, and advances 'towards? Whether his aim is a right one or a wrong one, forms 'but my second question.' Here, then, is a small 'human Pasquil,' not without poetic interest.

However, be this as it may, we apprehend the eye of science at least cannot view him with indifference. Doubtful, false as much is in Cagliostro's manner of being, of this there is no doubt, that starting from the lowest point of Fortune's wheel, he rose to a height universally notable; that, without external furtherance, money, beauty, bravery, almost without common sense, or any discernible worth whatever, he sumptuously supported, for a long course of years, the wants and digestion of one of the greediest bodies, and one of the greediest minds; outwardly in his five senses, inwardly in his 'sixth sense, that of vanity,' nothing straitened. Clear enough it is, however much may be supposititious, that this japanned Chariot, rushing through the world, with dust-clouds and loud noise, at the speed of four swift horses, and topheavy with luggage, has an existence. The six Beef-eaters too, that ride prosperously heralding his advent, honourably escorting, menially waiting on him, are they not realities? Ever must the purse open, paying turnpikes, tavern-bills, drink-moneys, and the thousandfold tear and wear of such a team; yet ever, like a horn-of-plenty, does it pour; and after brief rest, the chariot ceases not

to roll. Whereupon rather pressingly arises the scientific question: How? Within that wonderful machinery, of horses, wheels, top-luggage, beef-eaters, sits only a gross, thickset Individual, evincing dulness enough; and by his side a Seraphina, with a look of doubt ful reputation: how comes it that means still meet ends, that the whole Engine, like a steam coach wanting fuel, does not stagnate, go silent, and fall to pieces in the ditch? Such question did the scientific curiosity of the present writer often put; and for many a day in vain.

Neither, indeed, as Book-readers know, was he peculiar herein. The great Schiller, for example, struck both with the poetic and the scientific phases of the matter, admitted the influences of the former to shape themselves anew within him; and strove with his usual impetuosity to burst (since unlocking was impossible) the secrets of the latter: and so his unfinished Novel, the *Geisterseher*, saw the light. Still more renowned is Goethe's Drama of the *Gross-Kophta;* which, as himself informs us, delivered him from a state of mind that had become alarming to certain friends; so deep was the hold this business, at one of its epochs, had taken of him. A dramatic Fiction, that of his, based on the strictest possible historical study and inquiry; wherein perhaps the faithfulest image of the historical Fact, as yet extant in any shape, lies in artistic miniature curiously unfolded. Nay mere Newspaper-readers, of a certain age, can bethink them of our London Egyptian Lodges of High Science; of the Countess Seraphina's dazzling jewelries, nocturnal brilliancies, sibyllic ministrations and revelations; of Miss Fry and Milord Scott, and Messrs. Priddle and the other shark *bailiffs;* and Lord Mansfield's judgment-seat; the Comte d'Adhémar, the Diamond Necklace, and Lord George Gordon. For Cagliostro, hovering through unknown space, twice (perhaps thrice) lighted on our London, and did business in the great chaos there.

Unparalleled Cagliostro! Looking at thy so attractively decorated private theatre, wherein thou actedst and livedst, what hand but itches to draw aside thy curtain; overhaul thy paste-boards, paint-pots, paper-mantles, stage-lamps, and turning the whole inside out, find *thee* in the middle thereof! For there of a truth wert thou: though the rest was all foam and sham, there sattest *thou*, as large as life, and as esurient; warring against the world, and indeed conquering the world, for it remained thy tributary, and yielded daily rations. Innumerable Sheriff's-officers, Exempts, Sbirri, Alguazils, of every European climate, were prowling on thy traces,

their intents hostile enough; thyself wert single against them all; in the whole earth thou hadst no friend. What say we, in the whole earth? In the whole universe thou hadst no friend! Heaven knew nothing of thee; *could* in charity know nothing of thee; and as for Beelzebub, *his* friendship, it is ascertained, cannot count for much.

But to proceed with business. The present inquirer, in obstinate investigation of a phenomenon so noteworthy, has searched through the whole not inconsiderable circle which his tether (of circumstances, geographical position, trade, health, extent of money-capital) enables him to describe: and, sad to say, with the most imperfect results. He has read Books in various languages and jargons; feared not to soil his fingers, hunting through ancient dusty Magazines, to sicken his heart in any labyrinth of iniquity and imbecility; nay he had not grudged to dive even into the infectious *Mémoires de Casanova*, for a hint or two,—could he have found that work, which, however, most British Librarians make a point of denying that they possess. A painful search, as through some spiritual pest-house; and then with such issue! The quantity of discoverable printing about Cagliostro (so much being burnt) is now not great; nevertheless in frightful proportion to the quantity of information given. Except vague Newspaper rumours and surmises, the things found written of this Quack are little more than temporary Manifestos, by himself, by gulled or gulling disciples of his: not true therefore; at best only certain fractions of what he wished or expected the blinder Public to reckon true; misty, embroiled, for most part highly stupid; perplexing, even provoking; which can only be believed—to be, under such and such conditions, Lies. Of this sort emphatically is the English '*Life of the Count Cagliostro*, price three shillings and sixpence:' a Book indeed which one might hold (so fatuous, inane is it) to be some mere dream-vision and unreal eidolon, did it not now stand palpably there, as 'Sold by T. Hookham, Bond Street, 1787;' and bear to be handled, spurned at and torn into pipe-matches. Some human creature doubtless was at the writing of it; but of what kind, country, trade, character or gender, you will in vain strive to fancy. Of like fabulous stamp are the *Mémoires pour le Comte de Cagliostro*, emitted, with *Requête à joindre*, from the Bastille, during that sorrowful business of the Diamond Necklace, in 1786; no less the *Lettre du Comte de Cagliostro au Peuple Anglais*, which followed shortly after, at London; from which two indeed, that fatuous inexplicable

English *Life* has perhaps been mainly manufactured. Next come the *Mémoires authentiques pour servir à l'Histoire du Comte de Cagliostro*, twice printed in the same year 1786, at Strasburg and at Paris; a swaggering, lascivious Novelette, without talent, without truth or worth, happily of small size. So fares it with us: alas, all this is but the *outside* decorations of the private-theatre, or the sounding of catcalls and applauses from the stupid audience; nowise the interior bare walls and dress-room which we wanted to see! Almost our sole even half-genuine documents are a small barren pamphlet, *Cagliostro démasqué à Varsovie, en* 1780; and a small barren Volume purporting to be his *Life*, written at Rome, of which latter we have a French version, dated 1791. It is on this *Vie de Joseph Balsamo, connu sous le Nom de Comte Cagliostro*, that our main dependence must be placed; of which Work, meanwhile, whether it is wholly or only half-genuine, the reader may judge by one fact: that it comes to us through the medium of the Roman Inquisition, and the proofs to substantiate it lie in the Holy Office there. Alas, this reporting Familiar of the Inquisition was too probably something of a Liar; and he reports lying Confessions of one who was not so much a Liar as a Lie! In such enigmatic duskiness, and thrice-folded involution, after all inquiries, does the matter yet hang.

Nevertheless, by dint of meditation and comparison, light-points that stand fixed, and abide scrutiny, do here and there disclose themselves; diffusing a fainter light over what otherwise were dark, so that it is no longer invisible, but only dim. Nay after all, is there not in this same uncertainty a kind of fitness, of poetic congruity? Much that would offend the eye stands discreetly lapped in shade. Here too Destiny has cared for her favourite: that a powder-nimbus of astonishment, mystification and uncertainty should still encircle the Quack of Quacks, is right and suitable; such was by Nature and Art his chosen uniform and environment. Thus, as formerly in Life, so now in History, it is in huge fluctuating smoke-whirlwinds, partially illumed into a most brazen glory, yet united, coalescing with the region of everlasting Darkness, in miraculous clear-obscure, that he works and rides.

'Stern Accuracy in inquiring, bold Imagination in expounding 'and filling-up; these,' says friend Sauerteig, 'are the two pinions 'on which History soars,'—or flutters and wabbles. To which two pinions let us and the readers of this Magazine now daringly commit ourselves. Or chiefly indeed to the *latter* pinion, of

Imagination; which, if it be the *larger*, will indeed make an unequal flight! Meanwhile, the style at least shall if possible be equal to the subject.

Know, then, that in the year 1743, in the city of Palermo, in Sicily, the family of Signor Pietro Balsamo, a shopkeeper, were exhilarated by the birth of a Boy. Such occurrences have now become so frequent, that, miraculous as they are, they occasion little astonishment: old Balsamo for a space, indeed, laid down his ellwands and unjust balances; but for the rest, met the event with equanimity. Of the possetings, junketings, gossipings, and other ceremonial rejoicings, transacted according to the custom of the country, for welcome to a New-comer, not the faintest tradition has survived; enough, that the small New-comer, hitherto a mere ethnic or heathen, is in a few days made a Christian of, or as we vulgarly say, christened; by the name Giuseppe. A fat, red, globular kind of fellow, not under nine pounds avoirdupois, the bold Imagination can figure him to be: if not proofs, there are indications that sufficiently betoken as much.

Of his teething and swaddling adventures, of his scaldings, squallings, pukings, purgings, the strictest search into History can discover nothing; not so much as the epoch when he passed out of long-clothes stands noted in the fasti of Sicily. That same 'larger pinion' of Imagination, nevertheless, conducts him from his native blind-alley, into the adjacent street *Casaro;* descries him, with certain contemporaries now unknown, essaying himself in small games of skill; watching what phenomena, of carriage-transits, dog-battles, street-music, or suchlike, the neighbourhood might offer (intent above all on any windfall of chance *provender*); now, with incipient scientific spirit, puddling in the gutters; now, as small poet (or maker), baking mud-pies. Thus does he tentatively coast along the outskirts of Existence, till once he shall be strong enough to land and make a footing there.

Neither does it seem doubtful that with the earliest exercise of speech, the gifts of simulation and dissimulation began to manifest themselves; Giuseppe, or Beppo as he was now called, could indeed speak the truth,—but only when he saw his advantage in it. Hungry also, as above hinted, he too-probably often was: a keen faculty of digestion, a meagre larder within doors; these two circumstances, so frequently conjoined in this world, reduced him to his inventions. As to the thing called Morals, and knowledge

of Right and Wrong, it seems pretty certain that such knowledge, the sad fruit of Man's Fall, had in great part been spared him; if he ever heard the commandment, *Thou shalt not steal*, he most probably could not believe in it, therefore could not obey it. For the rest, though of quick temper, and a ready striker where clear prospect of victory showed itself, we fancy him vociferous rather than bellicose, not prone to violence where stratagem will serve; almost pacific, indeed, had not his many wants necessitated him to many conquests. Above all things, a brazen impudence develops itself; the crowning gift of one born to scoundrelism. In a word, the fat thickset Beppo, as he skulks about there, plundering, playing dog's tricks, with his finger in every mischief, already gains character; shrill housewives of the neighbourhood, whose sausages he has filched, whose weaker sons maltreated, name him Beppo Maldetto, and indignantly prophesy that he will be hanged. A prediction which, as will be seen, the issue has signally falsified.

We hinted that the household larder was in a leanish state; in fact, the outlook of the Balsamo family was getting troubled; old Balsamo had, during these things, been called away on his long journey. Poor man! The future eminence and preëminence of his Beppo he foresaw not, or what a world's-wonder he had thoughtlessly generated; as indeed, which of us, by much calculating, can sum-up the net-total (Utility, or Inutility) of any his most indifferent act,—a seed cast into the seedfield of TIME, to grow there, producing fruits or poisons, forever! Meanwhile Beppo himself gazed heavily into the matter; hung his thick lips while he saw his mother weeping; and, for the rest, eating what fat or sweet thing he could come at, let Destiny take its course.

The poor widow, ill-named *Felicità*, spinning out a painful livelihood by such means as only the poor and forsaken know, could not but many times cast an impatient eye on her brass-faced, voracious Beppo; and ask him, If he never meant to turn himself to anything? A maternal uncle, of the moneyed sort (for he has uncles not without influence), has already placed him in the Seminary of St. Roch, to gain some tincture of schooling there: but Beppo feels himself misplaced in that sphere; 'more than once runs away;' is flogged, snubbed, tyrannically checked on all sides; and finally, with such slender stock of schooling as had pleased to offer itself, returns to the street. The widow, as we said, urges him, the uncles urge: Beppo, wilt thou never turn thyself to anything? Beppo, with such speculative faculty, from such low watchtower as he

commands, is in truth, being forced to it, from time to time, looking abroad into the world; surveying the conditions of mankind, therewith contrasting his own wishes and capabilities. Alas, his wishes are manifold; a most hot Hunger (in all kinds), as above hinted; but on the other hand, his leading capability seemed only the Power to Eat. What profession or condition, then? Choose; for it is time. Of all the terrestrial professions, that of Gentleman, it seemed to Beppo, had, under these circumstances, been most suited to his feelings: but then the outfit? the apprentice-fee? Failing which, he, with perhaps as much sagacity as one could expect, decides for the Ecclesiastical.

Behold him then, once more by the uncle's management, journeying, a chubby brass-faced boy of thirteen, beside the Reverend Father-General of the Benfratelli, to their neighbouring Convent of Cartegirone, with intent to enter himself novice there. He has donned the novice-habit; is 'intrusted to the keeping of the Convent-Apothecary,' on whose gallipots and crucibles he looks round with wonder. Were it by accident that he found himself Apothecary's Famulus, were it by choice of his own—nay was it not, in either case, by *design* of Destiny, intent on perfecting her work?—Enough, in this Cartegirone Laboratory there awaited him, though as yet he knew it not, life-guidance and determination; the great want of every genius, even of the scoundrel-genius. He himself confesses that he here learned some (or, as he calls it, *the*) 'principles of chemistry and medicine.' Natural enough: new books of the Chemists lay here, old books of the Alchemists; distillations, sublimations visibly went on; discussions there were, oral and written, of gold-making, salve-making, treasure-digging, divining-rods, projection, and the alcahest: besides, had he not among his fingers calxes, acids, Leyden-jars? Some first elements of medico-chemical conjurorship, so far as phosphorescent mixtures, aqua-toffana, ipecacuanha, cantharides tincture, and suchlike would go, were now attainable; sufficient when the hour came, to set-up any average Quack, much more the Quack of Quacks. It is here, in this unpromising environment, that the seeds, therapeutic, thaumaturgic, of the Grand Cophta's stupendous workings and renown were sown.

Meanwhile, as observed, the environment looked unpromising enough. Beppo with his two endowments of Hunger and of Power to Eat, had made the best choice he could; yet, as it soon proved, a rash and disappointing one. To his astonishment, he finds that

even here he 'is in a conditional world;' and, if he will employ his capability of eating or enjoying, must first, in some measure, work and suffer. Contention enough hereupon: but now dimly arises or reproduces itself, the question, Whether there were not a *shorter* road, that of stealing? Stealing—under which, generically taken, you may include the whole art of scoundrelism; for what is Lying itself but a *theft* of my belief?—stealing, we say, is properly the North-West Passage to Enjoyment: while common Navigators sail painfully along torrid shores, laboriously doubling this or the other Cape of Hope, your adroit Thief-Parry, drawn on smooth dog-sledges, is already there and back again. The misfortune is, that stealing requires a talent; and failure in that North-West voyage is more fatal than in any other. We hear that Beppo was 'often punished:' painful experiences of the fate of genius; for all genius, by its nature, comes to disturb *somebody* in his ease, and your thief-genius more so than most!

Readers can now fancy the sensitive skin of Beppo mortified with prickly cilices, wealed by knotted thongs; his soul afflicted by vigils and forced fasts; no eye turned kindly on him; everywhere the bent of his genius rudely contravened. However, it is the first property of genius to grow in spite of contradiction, and even by means thereof;—as the vital germ pushes itself through the dull soil, and lives by what strove to bury it! Beppo, waxing into strength of bone and character, sets his face stiffly against persecution, and is not a whit disheartened. On *such* chastisements and chastisers he can look with a certain genial disdain. Beyond convent-walls, with their sour stupid shavelings, lies Palermo, lies the world; here too is he, still alive,—though worse off than he wished; and feels that the world is his oyster, which he (by chemical or other means) will one day open. Nay, we find there is a touch of grim Humour unfolds itself in the youth; the surest sign, as is often said, of a character naturally great. Witness, for example, how he acts on this to his ardent temperament so trying occasion. While the monks sit at meat, the impetuous voracious Beppo (that stupid Inquisition-Biographer records it as a thing of course) is set not to eat with them, not to pick up the crumbs that fall from them, but to stand 'reading the Martyrology' for their pastime! The brave adjusts himself to the inevitable. Beppo reads that dullest Martyrology of theirs; but reads out of it not what is printed there, but what his own vivid brain on the spur of the moment devises: instead of the names of Saints, all heartily in-

different to him, he reads out the names of the most notable Palermo 'unfortunate-females,' now beginning to interest him a little. What a 'deep world-irony,' as the Germans call it, lies here! The Monks, of course, felled him to the earth, and flayed him with scourges; but what did it avail? This only became apparent, to himself and them, that he had now outgrown their monk-discipline; as the Psyche does its chrysalis-shell, and bursts it. Giuseppe Balsamo bids farewell to Cartegirone forever and a day.

So now, by consent or not of the ghostly Benfratelli (Friars of *Mercy*, as they were named!), our Beppo has again returned to the maternal uncle at Palermo. The uncle naturally asked him, What he next meant to do? Beppo, after stammering and hesitating for some length of weeks, makes answer: Try Painting. Well and good! So Beppo gets him colours, brushes, fit tackle, and addicts himself for some space of time to the study of what is innocently called *Design*. Alas, if we consider Beppo's great Hunger, now that new senses were unfolding in him, how inadequate are the exiguous resources of Design; how necessary to attempt quite another deeper species of Design, of Designs! It is true, he lives with his uncle, has culinary meat; but where is the pocket-money for other costlier sorts of meats to come from? As the Kaiser Joseph was wont to say: From my head alone (*De ma tête seule*)!

The Roman Biographer, though a most wooden man, has incidentally thrown some light on Beppo's position at this juncture: both on his wants and his resources. As to the first, it appears (using the wooden man's phraseology) that he kept the 'worst company,' led the 'loosest life;' was hand-in-glove with all the swindlers, gamblers, idle apprentices, unfortunate-females, of Palermo: in the study and practice of Scoundrelism diligent beyond most. The genius which has burst asunder convent-walls, and other rubbish of impediments, now flames upward towards its mature splendour. Wheresoever a stroke of mischief is to be done, a slush of so-called vicious enjoyment to be swallowed, there with hand and throat is Beppo Balsamo seen. He will be a Master, one day, in his profession. Not indeed that he has yet quitted Painting, or even purposes so much: for the present, it is useful, indispensable, as a stalking-horse to the maternal uncle and neighbours; nay to himself,—for with all the ebullient impulses of scoundrel-genius restlessly seething in him, irrepressibly bursting through, he has the noble unconsciousness of genius; guesses not, dare not guess, that he is a born scoundrel, much less a born world-scoundrel.

But as for the other question, of his resources, these we perceive were several-fold, and continually extending. Not to mention any pictorial exiguities, which indeed existed chiefly in expectance,—there had almost accidentally arisen for him, in the first place, the resource of Pandering. He has a fair cousin living in the house with him, and she again has a lover; Beppo stations himself as go-between; delivers letters; fails not to drop hints that a lady, to be won or kept, must be generously treated; that such and such a pair of earrings, watch, necklace, or even sum of money, would work wonders; which valuables, adds the wooden Roman Biographer, 'he then appropriated furtively.' Like enough! Next, however, as another more lasting resource, he forges; at first in a small way, and trying his apprentice-hand: tickets for the theatre, and such trifles. Erelong, however, we see him fly at higher quarry; by practice he has acquired perfection in the great art of counterfeiting hands; and will exercise it on the large or on the narrow scale, for a consideration. Among his relatives is a Notary, with whom he can insinuate himself; for purpose of study, or even of practice. In the presses of this Notary lies a Will, which Beppo contrives to come at, and falsify 'for the benefit of a certain Religious House.' Much good may it do them! Many years afterwards the fraud was detected; but Beppo's benefit in it was spent and safe long before. Thus again the stolid Biographer expresses horror or wonder that he should have forged leave-of-absence for a monk, 'counterfeiting the signature of the Superior.' Why not? A forger must forge what is wanted of him: the Lion truly preys not on mice; yet shall he refuse such, if they jump into his mouth? Enough, the indefatigable Beppo has here opened a quite boundless mine; wherein through his whole life he will, as occasion calls, dig, at his convenience. Finally, he can predict fortunes and show visions,—by phosphorus and legerdemain. This, however, only as a dilettantism; to take-up the earnest profession of Magician does not yet enter into his views. Thus perfecting himself in all branches of his art, does our Balsamo live and grow. Stupid, pudding-faced as he looks and is, there is a vulpine astucity in him; and then a wholeness, a heartiness, a kind of blubbery impetuosity, an oiliness so plausible-looking: give him only length of life, he will rise to the top of his profession.

Consistent enough with such blubbery impetuosity in Beppo is another fact we find recorded of him, that at this time he was found 'in most brawls,' whether in street or tavern. The way of

his business led him into liability to such ; neither as yet had he learned prudence by age. Of choleric temper, with all his obesity; a square-built, burly, vociferous fellow; ever ready with his stroke (if victory seemed sure); nay, at bottom, not without a certain pig-like defensive-ferocity, perhaps even something more. Thus, when you find him making a point to attack, if possible, '*all* officers of justice,' and deforce them; delivering the wretched from their talons: was not this, we say, a kind of dog-faithfulness, and public spirit, either of the mastiff or of the cur species? Perhaps too there was a touch of that old Humour and 'world-irony' in it. One still more unquestionable feat he is recorded (we fear, on imperfect evidence) to have done: 'assassinated a canon.'

Remonstrances from growling maternal uncles could not fail; threats, disdains from ill-affected neighbours; tears from an expostulating widowed mother: these he shakes from him like dewdrops from the lion's mane. Still less could the Police neglect him; him the visibly rising Professor of Swindlery; the swashbuckler, to boot, and deforcer of bailiffs: he has often been captured, haled to their bar; yet hitherto, by defect of evidence, by good luck, intercession of friends, been dismissed with admonition. Two things, nevertheless, might now be growing clear: first, that the die was cast with Beppo, and he a scoundrel for life; second, that such a mixed, composite, crypto-scoundrel life could not endure, but must unfold itself into a pure, declared one. The Tree that is planted stands not still; *must* pass through all its stages and phases, from the state of acorn to that of green leafy oak, of withered leafless oak; to the state of felled timber, finally to that of firewood and ashes. Not less (though less visibly to dull eyes) the Act that is done, the condition that has realised itself; above all things, the Man, with his Fortunes, that has been born. Beppo, everyway in vigorous vitality, cannot continue half-painting half-swindling in Palermo; must develop himself into whole swindler; and, unless hanged there, seek his bread elsewhere. What the proximate cause, or signal, of such crisis and development might be, no man could say; yet most men would have confidently guessed, The Police. Nevertheless it proved otherwise; not by the flaming sword of Justice, but by the rusty dirk of a foolish private individual, is Beppo driven forth.

Walking one day in the fields (as the bold historic Imagination will figure) with a certain ninny of a 'Goldsmith named Marano,' as they pass one of those rock-chasms frequent in the fair Island

of Sicily, Beppo begins, in his oily, voluble way, to hint, That treasures often lay hid; that a Treasure lay hid *there*, as he knew by some pricking of his thumbs, divining-rod, or other talismanic monition: which Treasure might, by aid of science, courage, secrecy and a small judicious advance of money, be fortunately lifted. The gudgeon takes; advances, by degrees, to the length of 'sixty gold Ounces;'[2] sees magic circles drawn in the wane or in the full of the moon, blue (phosphorus) flames arise, split twigs auspiciously quiver; and at length—demands peremptorily that the Treasure be dug. A night is fixed on: the ninny Goldsmith, trembling with rapture and terror, breaks ground; digs, with thick breath and cold sweat, fiercely down, down, Beppo relieving him: the work advances; when, ah! at a certain stage of it (*before* fruition) hideous yells arise, a jingle like the emptying of Birmingham; six Devils pounce upon the poor sheep Goldsmith, and beat him almost to *mutton;* mercifully sparing Balsamo,—who indeed has himself summoned them thither, and as it were created them (with goat-skins and burnt cork). Marano, though a ninny, now knew how it lay; and furthermore that he had a stiletto. One of the grand drawbacks of swindler-genius! You accomplish the Problem; and then—the Elementary Quantities, Algebraic Symbols you worked on, will fly in your face!

Hearing of stilettos, our Algebraist begins to look around him, and view his empire of Palermo in the concrete. An empire now much exhausted; much infested, too, with sorrows of all kinds, and every day the more; nigh ruinous, in short; not worth being stabbed for. There is a world elsewhere. In any case, the young Raven has now shed his pens, and got fledged for flying. Shall he not spurn the whole from him, and soar off? Resolved, performed! Our Beppo quits Palermo; and, as it proved, on a long voyage: or, as the Inquisition-Biographer has it, 'he fled from Palermo, and overran the whole Earth.'

Here, then, ends the First Act of Count Alessandro Cagliostro's Life-drama. Let the curtain drop; and hang unrent, before an audience of mixed feeling, till the First of August.

[2] The Sicilian Ounce (*Onza*) is worth about ten shillings sterling.

FLIGHT LAST.

BEFORE entering on the second Section of Count Beppo's History, the Editor will indulge in a philosophical reflection.

This Beppic Hegira, or Flight from Palermo, we have now arrived at, brings us down, in European History, to somewhere about the epoch of the Peace of Paris. Old Feudal Europe, while Beppo flies forth into the whole Earth, has just finished the last of her 'tavern-brawls,' or wars; and lain down to doze, and yawn, and disconsolately wear-off the headaches, bruises, nervous prostration and flaccidity consequent thereon: for the brawl had been a long one, *Seven Years* long; and there had been many such, begotten, as is usual, of intoxication from Pride or other Devil's-drink, and foul humours in the constitution. Alas, it was not so much a disconsolate doze, after ebriety and quarrel, that poor old Feudal Europe had now to undergo, and then on awakening to drink anew, and quarrel anew: old Feudal Europe has fallen a-dozing to die! Her next awakening will be with no tavern-brawl, at the *King's Head* or *Prime Minister* tavern; but with the stern Avatar of DEMOCRACY, hymning its world-thrilling birth- and battle-song in the distant West;—therefrom to go out conquering and to conquer, till it have made a circuit of all the Earth, and old dead Feudal Europe is born again (after infinite pangs!) into a new Industrial one. At Beppo's Hegira, as we said, Europe was in the last languor and stertorous fever-sleep of Dissolution: alas, with us, and with our sons for a generation or two, it is almost still worse,—were it not that in Birth-throes there is ever hope, in Death-throes the final departure of hope.

Now the philosophic reflection we were to indulge in, was no other than this, most germane to our subject: the portentous extent of Quackery, the multitudinous variety of Quacks that, along with our Beppo, and under him each in his degree, overran

all Europe during that same period, the latter half of last century. It was the very age of impostors, cut-purses, swindlers, double-goers, enthusiasts, ambiguous persons; quacks simple, quacks compound; crackbrained, or with deceit prepense; quacks and quackeries of all colours and kinds. How many Mesmerists, Magicians, Cabalists, Swedenborgians, Illuminati, Crucified Nuns, and Devils of Loudun! To which the Inquisition-Biographer adds Vampires, Sylphs, Rosicrucians, Freemasons, and an *Etcetera.* Consider your Schröpfers, Cagliostros, Casanovas, Saint-Germains, Dr. Grahams; the Chevalier d'Eon, Psalmanazar, Abbé Paris and the Ghost of Cocklane! As if Bedlam had broken loose; as if, rather, in that 'spiritual Twelfth-hour of the night,' the everlasting Pit had opened itself, and from *its* still blacker bosom had issued Madness and all manner of shapeless Misbirths, to masquerade and chatter there.

But indeed, if we consider, how could it be otherwise? In that stertorous last fever-sleep of our European world, must not Phantasms enough, born of the Pit, as all such *are*, flit past, in ghastly masquerading and chattering? A low scarce-audible moan (in Parliamentary Petitions, Meal-mobs, Popish Riots, Treatises on Atheism) struggles from the moribund sleeper; frees him not from his hellish guests and saturnalia: Phantasms these 'of a dying brain.' So too, when the old Roman world, the measure of its iniquities being full, was to expire, and (in still bitterer agonies) be born again, had they not Veneficæ, Mathematici, Apolloniuses with the Golden Thigh, Apollonius' Asses, and False Christs enough,—before a REDEEMER arose!

For, in truth, and altogether apart from such half-figurative language, Putrescence is not more naturally the scene of unclean creatures in the world physical, than Social Decay is of quacks in the world moral. Nay, look at it with the eye of the mere Logician, of the Political Economist. In such periods of Social Decay, what is called an overflowing Population, that is a Population which, under the old Captains of Industry (named Higher Classes, *Ricos Hombres*, Aristocracies and the like), can no longer find work and wages, increases the number of Unprofessionals, Lackalls, Social Nondescripts; with appetite of utmost keenness, which there is no known method of satisfying. Nay more, and perversely enough, ever as Population augments, your Captains of Industry can and do dwindle more and more into Captains of Idleness; whereby the more and more overflowing Population is worse and worse governed

(shown *what to do*, for that is the only government): thus is the candle lighted at both ends; and the number of social Nondescripts increases in *double*-quick ratio. Whoso is alive, it is said, 'must live;' at all events, will live; a task which daily gets harder, reduces to stranger shifts.

And now furthermore, with general economic distress, in such a Period, there is usually conjoined the utmost decay of moral principle: indeed, so universal is this conjunction, many men have seen it to be a concatenation and causation; justly enough, except that such have very generally, ever since a certain religious-repentant feeling went out of date, committed one sore mistake: what is vulgarly called putting the cart before the horse. Politico-economical benefactor of the species! deceive not thyself with barren sophisms: National suffering *is*, if thou wilt understand the words, verily a 'judgment of God;' has ever been preceded by national crime. 'Be it here once more maintained before the 'world,' cries Sauerteig, in one of his *Springwurzeln*, 'that temporal 'Distress, that Misery of any kind, is not the *cause* of Immorality, 'but the effect thereof! Among individuals, it is true, so wide is 'the empire of Chance, poverty and wealth go all at hap-hazard; 'a St. Paul is making tents at Corinth, while a Kaiser Nero fiddles, 'in ivory palaces, over a burning Rome. Nevertheless here too, if 'nowise wealth and poverty, yet well-being and ill-being, even in 'the temporal economic sense, go commonly in respective partner-'ship with Wisdom and with Folly: no man can, for a length of 'time, be wholly wretched, if there is not a disharmony (a folly and 'wickedness) within himself; neither can the richest Crœsus and 'never so eupeptic (for he too has his indigestions, and dies at last 'of surfeit), be other than discontented, perplexed, unhappy, if he 'be a Fool.'—This we apprehend is true, O Sauerteig, yet not the whole truth: for there is more than day's-work and day's-wages in this world of ours: which, as thou knowest, is itself quite other than a 'Workshop and Fancy-Bazaar,' is also a 'Mystic Temple and Hall of Doom.' Thus we have heard of such things as good men struggling with adversity, and offering a spectacle for the very gods.

'But with a nation,' continues he, 'where the multitude of the 'chances covers, in great measure, the uncertainty of Chance, it 'may be said to hold always that general Suffering is the fruit of 'general Misbehaviour, general Dishonesty. Consider it well; 'had all men stood faithfully to their posts, the Evil, when it first

rose, had been manfully fronted, and abolished, not lazily blinked, and left to grow, with the foul sluggard's comfort: "It will last my time." Thou foul sluggard, and even thief (*Faulenzer, ja Dieb*)! For art thou not a thief, to pocket thy day's-wages (be they counted in *groschen* or in gold thousands) for this, if it be for anything, for watching on thy special watch-tower that God's City (which this His World is, where His children dwell) suffer no damage; and, all the while, to watch only that thy own ease be not invaded,—let otherwise hard come to hard as it will and can? Unhappy! It will last thy time: thy worthless sham of an existence, wherein nothing but the Digestion was real, will have evaporated in the interim; it will last thy time: but will it last thy *Eternity?* Or what if it should *not* last thy time (mark that also, for that also will be the fate of *some* such lying sluggard), but take fire, and explode, and consume thee like the moth!'

The sum of the matter, in any case, is, that national Poverty nd national Dishonesty go together; that continually increasing ocial Nondescripts get ever the hungrier, ever the falser. Now ay, have we not here the very making of Quackery; raw-material, lastic-energy, both in full action? Dishonesty the raw-material, Hunger the plastic-energy: what will not the two realise? Nay bserve farther how Dishonesty is the raw-material not of Quacks nly, but also in great part of Dupes. In Goodness, were it never o simple, there is the surest instinct for the Good; the uneasiest nconquerable repulsion for the False and Bad. The very Devil Mephistopheles cannot deceive poor guileless Margaret: 'it stands written on his brow that he never loved a living soul!' The like oo has many a human inferior Quack painfully experienced; the ike lies in store for our hero Beppo. But now with such abunlant raw-material not only to make Quacks of, but to feed and ccupy them on, if the plastic-energy of Hunger fail not, what world shall we have! The wonder is not that the eighteenth entury had very numerous Quacks, but rather that they were ot innumerable.

In that same French Revolution alone, which burnt-up so much, what unmeasured masses of Quackism were set fire to; nay, as oul mephitic fire-damp in that case, were made to flame in a ierce, sublime *splendour;* coruscating, even illuminating! The Count Saint-Germain, some twenty years later, had found a quite ew element, of Fraternisation, Sacred right of Insurrection, Oratorship of the Human Species, wherefrom to body himself forth

quite otherwise: Schröpfer needed not now, as Blackguard undeterred, have solemnly shot himself in the *Rosenthal;* might have solemnly sacrificed himself, as Jacobin half-heroic, in the *Place de la Révolution.* For your quack-genius is indeed born, but also made; circumstances shape him or stunt him. Beppo Belsamo, born British in these new days, could have conjured fewer Spirits; yet had found a living and glory, as Castlereagh Spy, Irish Associationist, Blacking-Manufacturer, Book-Publisher, Able Editor. Withal too the reader will observe that Quacks, in every time, are of two sorts: the Declared Quack; and the Undeclared, who, if you question him, will deny stormfully, both to others and to himself; of which two quack-species the proportions vary with the varying capacity of the age. If Beppo's was the age of the Declared, therein, after all French Revolutions, we will grant, lay one of its main distinctions from ours; which is it not yet, and for a generation or two, the age of the Undeclared? Alas, almost a still more detestable age;—yet now (by God's grace), with Prophecy, with irreversible Enactment, registered in Heaven's chancery,—where *thou* too, if thou wilt *look*, mayst read and know, That its death-doom shall not linger. Be it speedy, be it sure!—And so herewith were our philosophical reflection, on the nature, causes, prevalence, decline and expected temporary destruction of Quackery, concluded; and now the Beppic poetic Narrative can once more take its course.

Beppo, then, like a Noah's Raven, is out upon that watery waste of dissolute, beduped, distracted European Life, to see if there is any carrion there. One unguided little Raven, in the wide-weltering 'Mother of dead Dogs:' will he not come to harm; will he not be snapt-up, drowned, starved and washed to the Devil there? No fear of him,—for a time. His eye (or scientific judgment), it is true, as yet takes-in only a small section of it; but then his scent (instinct of genius) is prodigious: several endowments, forgery and others, he has unfolded into talents; the two sources of all quack-talent, Cunning and Impudence, are his in richest measure.

As to his immediate course of action and adventure, the foolish Inquisition-Biographer, it must be owned, shows himself a fool, and can give us next to no insight. Like enough, Beppo 'fled to Messina;' simply as to the nearest city, and to get across to the mainland; but as to this 'certain Althotas' whom he met there,

and voyaged with to Alexandria in Egypt, and how they made hemp into silk, and realised much money, and came to Malta, and studied in the Laboratory there, and then the certain Althotas died,—of all this what shall be said? The foolish Inquisition-Biographer is uncertain whether the certain Althotas was a Greek or a Spaniard: but unhappily the prior question is not settled, whether he *was* at all. Superfluous it seems to put down Beppo's own account of his procedure; he gave multifarious accounts, as the exigencies of the case demanded: this of the 'certain Althotas,' and hemp made into false silk, is as verisimilar as that other of the 'sage Althotas,' the heirship-apparent of Trebisond, and the Scherif of Mecca's "Adieu, unfortunate Child of Nature." Nay the guesses of the ignorant world; how Count Cagliostro had been travelling-tutor to a Prince (name not given), whom he murdered and took the money from; with others of the like,—were perhaps still more absurd. Beppo, we can see, was out and away,—the Devil knew whither. Far, variegated, painful might his roamings be. A plausible-looking shadow of him shows itself hovering over Naples and Calabria; thither, as to a famed high-school of Laziness and Scoundrelism, he may likely enough have gone to graduate. Of the Malta Laboratory, and Alexandrian hemp-silk, the less we say the better. This only is clear: That Beppo dived deep down into the lugubrious-obscure regions of Rascaldom; like a Knight to the palace of his Fairy; remained unseen there, and returned thence armed at all points.

If we fancy, meanwhile, that Beppo already meditated becoming Grand Cophta, and riding at Strasburg in the Cardinal's carriage, we mistake much. Gift of Prophecy has been wisely denied to man. Did a man *foresee* his life, and not merely *hope* it, and grope it, and so, by Necessity and Freewill, make and fabricate it into a reality, he were no *man*, but some other kind of creature, superhuman or subterhuman. No man sees far; the most see no farther than their noses. From the quite dim uncertain mass of the future, 'which lies there,' says a Scottish Humorist, 'uncombed, 'uncarded, like a mass of *tarry wool* proverbially *ill to spin*,' they spin out, better or worse, their rumply, infirm thread of Existence, and wind it up, up,—till the spool is *full;* seeing but some little half-yard of it at once; exclaiming, as they look into the betarred entangled mass of Futurity, We *shall* see!

The first authentic fact with regard to Beppo is, that his swart squat figure becomes visible in the Corso and Campo Vaccino of

Rome; that he 'lodges at the Sign of the Sun in the Rotonda,' and sells pen-drawings there. Properly they are not pen-drawings; but printed engravings or etchings, to which Beppo, with a pen and a little Indian ink, has added the degree of scratching to give them the air of such. Thereby mainly does he realise a thin livelihood. From which we infer that his transactions in Naples and Calabria, with Althotas and hemp-silk, or whatever else, had not turned to much.

Forged pen-drawings are no mine of wealth: neither was Beppo Balsamo anything of an Adonis; on the contrary, a most dusky, bull-necked, mastiff-faced, sinister-looking individual: nevertheless, on applying for the favour of the hand of Lorenza Feliciani, a beautiful Roman donzella, 'dwelling near the Trinity of the Pilgrims,' the unfortunate child of Nature prospers beyond our hopes. Authorities differ as to the rank and status of this fair Lorenza: one account says, she was the daughter of a Girdle-maker; but adds erroneously that it was in Calabria. The matter must remain suspended. Certain enough, she was a handsome buxom creature; 'both pretty and ladylike,' it is presumable; but having no offer, in a country too prone to celibacy, took-up with the bull-necked forger of pen-drawings, whose suit too was doubtless pressed with the most flowing rhetoric. She gave herself in marriage to him; and the parents admitted him to quarter in their house, till it should appear what was next to be done.

Two kitchen-fires, says the Proverb, burn not on one hearth: here, moreover, might be quite special causes of discord. Pen-drawing, at best a hungry concern, has now exhausted itself, and must be given up; but Beppo's household prospects brighten, on the other side: in the charms of his Lorenza he sees before him what the French call 'a Future confused and immense.' The hint was given; and, with reluctance, or without reluctance (for the evidence leans *both* ways), was taken and reduced to practice: Signor and Signora Balsamo are forth from the old Girdler's house, into the wide world, seeking and finding adventures.

The foolish Inquisition-Biographer, with painful scientific accuracy, furnishes a descriptive catalogue of all the successive Cullies (Italian Counts, French Envoys, Spanish Marquises, Dukes and Drakes) in various quarters of the known world, whom this accomplished pair took-in; with the sums each yielded, and the methods employed to bewitch him. Into which descriptive catalogue, why should we here so much as cast a glance? Cullies, the

easy cushions on which knaves and knavesses repose and fatten, have at all times existed, in considerable profusion: neither can the fact of a clothed animal, Marquis or other, having acted in that capacity to never such lengths, entitle him to mention in History. We pass over these. Beppo, or as we must now learn to call him, the Count, appears at Venice, at Marseilles, at Madrid, Cadiz, Lisbon, Brussels; makes scientific pilgrimage to Quack Saint-Germain in Westphalia, religious-commercial to Saint Saint-James in Compostella, to Our Lady in Loretto: south, north, east, west, he shows himself; finds everywhere Lubricity and Stupidity (better or worse provided with cash), the two elements on which he thaumaturgically can work and live. Practice makes perfection; Beppo too was an apt scholar. By all methods he can awaken the stagnant imagination; cast maddening powder in the eyes.

Already in Rome he has cultivated whiskers, and put-on the uniform of a Prussian Colonel: dame Lorenza is fair to look upon; but how much fairer, if by the air of distance and dignity you lend enchantment to her! In other places, the Count appears as real Count; as Marquis Pellegrini (lately from foreign parts); as Count this and Count that, Count Proteus-Incognito; finally as Count Alessandro Cagliostro.[1] Figure him shooting through the world with utmost rapidity; ducking-under here, when the sword-fishes of Justice make a dart at him; ducking-up yonder, in new shape, at the distance of a thousand miles; not unprovided with forged vouchers of respectability; above all, with that best voucher of respectability, a four-horse carriage, beef-eaters, and open purse, for Count Cagliostro has ready-money and pays his way. At some Hotel of the Sun, Hotel of the Angel, Gold Lion, or Green Goose, or whatever Hotel it is, in whatever world-famous capital City, his chariot-wheels have rested; sleep and food have refreshed his live-stock, chiefly the pearl and soul thereof, his indispensable Lorenza, now no longer Dame Lorenza, but Countess Seraphina, looking seraphic enough! Moneyed Donothings, whereof in this vexed Earth there are many, ever lounging about such places, scan and comment on the foreign coat-of-arms; ogle the fair foreign woman; who timidly recoils from their gaze, timidly responds to their reverences, as in halls and passages, they obsequiously throw themselves in her way: erelong one moneyed Donothing, from amid his tags and tassels, sword-belts, fop-tackle, frizzled hair without

[1] Not altogether an *invention* this last; for his granduncle (a bellfounder at Messina?) was actually surnamed *Cagliostro*, as well as named *Giuseppe*.—O. Y.

brains beneath it, is heard speaking to another: "Seen the Countess?—Divine creature that!"—and so the game is begun.

Let not the too sanguine reader, meanwhile, fancy that it is all holiday and heyday with his Lordship. The course of scoundrelism, any more than that of true love, never did run smooth. Seasons there may be when Count Proteus-Incognito has his epaulettes torn from his shoulders; his garment-skirts clipt close by the buttocks; and is bid sternly tarry at Jericho till his beard be grown. Harpies of Law defile his solemn feasts; his light burns languid; for a space seems utterly snuffed out, and dead in malodorous vapour. Deal only to blaze up the brighter! There is scoundrel-life in Beppo Cagliostro; cast him among the mud, tread him out of sight there, the miasmata do but stimulate and refresh him, he rises sneezing, is strong and young again.

Behold him, for example, again in Palermo, after having seen many men and many lands; and how he again escapes thence. Why did he return to Palermo? Perhaps to astonish old friends by new grandeur; or for temporary shelter, if the Continent were getting hot for him; or perhaps in the mere way of general trade. He is seized there, and clapt in prison, for those foolish old businesses of the treasure-digging Goldsmith, of the forged Will.

'The manner of his escape,' says one, whose few words on this obscure matter are so many light-points for us, 'deserves to be described. The Son of one of the first Sicilian Princes, and great landed Proprietors (who moreover had filled important stations at the Neapolitan Court), was a person that united with a strong body and ungovernable temper all the tyrannical caprice, which the rich and great, without cultivation, think themselves entitled to exhibit.

'Donna Lorenza had contrived to gain this man; and on him the fictitious Marchese Pellegrini founded his security. The Prince testified openly that he was the protector of this stranger pair: but what was his fury when Joseph Balsamo, at the instance of those whom he had cheated, was cast into prison! He tried various means to deliver him; and as these would not prosper, he publicly, in the President's antechamber, threatened the plaintiffs' Advocate with the frightfulest misusage if the suit were not dropt, and Balsamo forthwith set at liberty. As the Advocate declined such proposal, he clutched him, beat him, threw him on the floor, trampled him with his feet, and could hardly be restrained from still farther outrages, when the President himself came running out at the tumult, and commanded peace.

'This latter, a weak, dependent man, made no attempt to punish the

injurer; the plaintiffs and their Advocate grew fainthearted; and Balsamo was let go; not so much as a registration in the Court-Books specifying his dismissal, who occasioned it, or how it took place.'[2]

Thus sometimes, a friend in the court is better than a penny in the purse! Marchese Pellegrini 'quickly thereafter left Palermo, 'and performed various travels, whereof my author could impart 'no clear information.' Whether, or how far, the Game-chicken Prince went with him is not hinted.

So it might, at times, be quite otherwise than in coach-and-four that our Cagliostro journeyed. Occasionally we find him as outrider journeying on horseback; only Seraphina and her sop (whom she is to suck and eat) lolling on carriage-cushions; the hardy Count glad that hereby he can have the shot paid. Nay sometimes he looks utterly poverty-struck, and has to journey one knows not how. Thus one briefest but authentic-looking glimpse of him presents itself in England, in the year 1772: no Count is he here, but mere Signor Balsamo again; engaged in house-painting, for which he has a most peculiar talent. Was it true that he painted the country-house of 'a Doctor Benemore;' and having not painted, but only smeared it, was refused payment, and got a lawsuit with expenses instead? If Doctor Benemore have left any representatives in this Earth, they are desired to speak out. We add only, that if young Beppo had one of the prettiest wives, old Benemore had one of the ugliest daughters; and so, putting one thing to another, matters might not be so bad.

For it is to be observed, that the Count, on his own side, even in his days of highest splendour, is not idle. Faded dames of quality have many wants: the Count has not studied in the convent Laboratory, or pilgrimed to the Count Saint-Germain, in Westphalia, to no purpose. With loftiest condescension he stoops to impart somewhat of his supernatural secrets,—for a consideration. Rowland's Kalydor is valuable; but what to the Beautifying-water of Count Alessandro! He that will undertake to smooth wrinkles, and make withered green parchment into a fair carnation skin, is he not one whom faded dames of quality will delight to honour? Or again, let the Beautifying-water succeed or not, have not such dames, if calumny may be in aught believed, *another* want? This want, too, the indefatigable Cagliostro will supply,—for a consideration. For faded gentlemen of quality the Count likewise has

[2] Goethe's *Werke*, b. xxviii. 132.

help. Not a charming Countess alone; but a 'Wine of Egypt' (cantharides not being unknown to him), sold in drops, more precious than nectar; which what faded gentleman of quality would not purchase with anything short of life? Consider now what may be done with potions, washes, charms, love-philtres, among a class of mortals, idle from the mother's womb; rejoicing to be taught the Ionic dances, and meditating of love from their tender nails!

Thus waxing, waning, broad-shining, or extinct, an inconstant but unwearied Moon, rides on its course the Cagliostric star. Thus are Count and Countess busy in their vocation; thus do they spend the golden season of their youth,—shall we say, 'for the Greatest Happiness of the greatest number'? Happy enough, had there been no sumptuary or adultery or swindlery Law-acts; no Heaven above, no Hell beneath; no flight of Time, and gloomy land of Eld and Destitution and Desperation, towards which, by law of Fate, they see themselves, at all moments, with frightful regularity, unaidably drifting.

The prudent man provides against the inevitable. Already Count Cagliostro, with his love-philtres, his cantharidic Wine of Egypt; nay far earlier, by his blue-flames and divining-rods, as with the poor sheep Goldsmith of Palermo; and ever since, by many a significant hint thrown out where the scene suited,—has dabbled in the Supernatural. As his seraphic Countess gives signs of withering, and one luxuriant branch of industry will die and drop off, others must be pushed into budding. Whether it was in England during what he called his 'first visit' in the year 1776 (for the before-first, house-smearing visit was, reason or none, to go for nothing) that he first thought of Prophecy as a trade, is unknown: certain enough, he had begun to practise it then; and this indeed not without a glimpse of insight into the English national character. Various, truly, are the pursuits of mankind; whereon they would fain, unfolding the future, take Destiny by surprise: with us, however, as a nation of shopkeepers, they may be all said to centre in this one, *Put money in thy purse!* O for a Fortunatus'-Pocket, with its ever-new coined gold;—if, indeed, the true prayer were not rather: O for a Crassus'-Drink, of *liquid* gold, that so the accursed throat of Avarice might for once have enough and to spare! Meanwhile whoso should engage, keeping clear of the gallows, to teach men the secret of making money, were not he a Professor sure of audience? Strong were the general Scepticism; still stronger the general Need and Greed. Count

Cagliostro, from his residence in Whitcombe Street, it is clear, had looked into the mysteries of the Little-go; by occult science knew the lucky number. Bish as yet was not; but Lotteries were; gulls also were. The Count has his Language-master, his Portuguese Jew, his nondescript Ex-Jesuits, whom he puts forth as antennæ, into coffee-houses, to stir-up the minds of men. 'Lord' Scott (a swindler swindled), and Miss Fry, and many others, were they here, could tell what it cost them: nay, the very Lawbooks, and Lord Mansfield and Mr. Howarth speak of hundreds, and jewel-boxes, and quite handsome booties. Thus can the bustard pluck geese, and, if Law do get the carcass, live upon their giblets; —now and then, however, finds a vulture, too tough to pluck.

The attentive reader is no doubt curious to understand all the What and the How of Cagliostro's procedure while England was the scene. As we too are, and have been; but unhappily all in vain. To that English *Life* of uncertain gender none, as was said, need in their utmost extremity repair. Scarcely the very lodging of Cagliostro can be ascertained; except incidentally that it was once in Whitcombe Street; for a few days, in Warwick Court, Holborn; finally, for some space, in the King's Bench Jail. Vain were it, meanwhile, for any reverencer of genius to pilgrim thither, seeking memorials of a great man. Cagliostro is clean gone: on the strictest search, no token never so faint discloses itself. He went, and left nothing behind him;—except perhaps a few cast-clothes, and other inevitable exuviæ, long since, not indeed annihilated (this nothing can be), yet beaten into mud, and spread as new soil over the general surface of Middlesex and Surrey; floated by the Thames into old Ocean; or flitting, the gaseous parts of them, in the universal Atmosphere, borne thereby to remotest corners of the Earth, or beyond the limits of the Solar System! So fleeting is the track and habitation of man; so wondrous the stuff he builds of; his house, his very house of houses (what we call his *body*), were he the first of geniuses, will evaporate in the strangest manner, and vanish even whither we have said.

To us on our side, however, it is cheering to discover, for one thing, that Cagliostro found antagonists worthy of him: the bustard plucking geese, and living on their giblets, found not our whole Island peopled with geese, but here and there, as above hinted, with vultures, with hawks of still sharper quality than his. Priddle, Aylett, Saunders, O'Reilly: let these stand forth as the vindicators of English national character. By whom Count Alessandro

Cagliostro, as in dim fluctuating outline indubitably appears, was bewritted, arrested, fleeced, hatchelled, bewildered and bedevilled, till the very Jail of King's Bench seemed a refuge from them. A wholly obscure contest, as was natural; wherein, however, to all candid eyes the vulturous and falconish character of our Isle fully asserts itself; and the foreign Quack of Quacks, with all his thaumaturgic Hemp-silks, Lottery-numbers, Beauty-waters, Seductions, Phosphorus-boxes, and Wines of Egypt, is seen matched, and nigh throttled, by the natural unassisted cunning of English Attorneys. Whereupon the bustard, feeling himself so pecked and plucked, takes wing, and flies to foreign parts.

One good thing he has carried with him, notwithstanding: initiation into some primary arcana of Freemasonry. The Quack of Quacks, with his primitive bias towards the supernatural-mystificatory, must long have had his eye on Masonry; which, with its blazonry and mummery, sashes, drawn sabres, brothers Terrible, brothers Venerable (the whole so imposing by candle-light), offered the choicest element for him. All men profit by *Union* with men; the quack as much as another; nay in these two words, *Sworn Secrecy*, alone has he not found a very talisman! Cagliostro, then, determines on Masonship. It was afterwards urged that the Lodge to which he and his Seraphina got admission, for she also was made a Mason, or Masoness, and had a riband-garter solemnly bound on, with order to sleep in it for a night,—was a Lodge of low rank in the social scale; numbering not a few of the pastry-cook and hair-dresser species. To which it could only be replied, that these alone spoke French; that a man and mason, though he cooked pastry, was still a man and mason. Be this as it might, the apt Recipiendary is rapidly promoted through the three grades of Apprentice, Companion, Master; at the cost of five guineas. That of his being first raised into the air, by means of a rope and pulley fixed in the ceiling, 'during which the heavy mass of his body must assuredly 'have caused him a dolorous sensation;' and then being forced blindfold to shoot himself (though with privily *dis*loaded pistol), in sign of courage and obedience: all this we can esteem an apocrypha, —palmed on the Roman Inquisition, otherwise prone to delusion. Five guineas, and some foolish froth-speeches, delivered over liquor and otherwise, was the cost. If you ask now, In *what* London Lodge was it? Alas, we know not, and shall never know. Certain only that Count Alessandro *is* a master-mason; that having once crossed the threshold, his plastic genius will not stop there. Behold,

accordingly, he has bought from a 'Bookseller' certain manuscripts belonging to 'one George Cofton, a man absolutely unknown to him' and to us, which treat of the 'Egyptian Masonry'! In other words, Count Alessandro will *blow* with his new five-guinea bellows; having always occasion to raise the wind.

With regard specially to that huge soap-bubble of an Egyptian Masonry which he blew, and as conjuror caught many flies with, it is our painful duty to say a little; not much. The Inquisition-Biographer, with deadly fear of heretical and democratical and black-magical Freemasons before his eyes, has gone into the matter to boundless depths; commenting, elucidating, even confuting: a certain expository masonic Order-Book of Cagliostro's, which he has laid hand on, opens the whole mystery to him. The ideas he declares to be Cagliostro's; the composition all a Disciple's, for the Count had no gift that way. What, then, does the Disciple set forth,—or, at lowest, the Inquisition-Biographer say that he sets forth? Much, much that is not to the point.

Understand, however, that once inspired, by the absolutely unknown George Cofton, with the notion of Egyptian Masonry, wherein as yet lay much 'magic and superstition,' Count Alessandro resolves to free it of these impious ingredients, and make it a kind of Last Evangel, or Renovator of the Universe,—which so needed renovation. 'As he did not believe anything in matter of Faith,' says our wooden Familiar, 'nothing could arrest him.' True enough: how did he move along, then; to what length did he go?

'In his system he promises his followers to conduct them to *perfection*, by means of a *physical and moral regeneration;* to enable them by the former (or physical) to find the *prime matter*, or Philosopher's Stone, and the *acacia* which consolidates in man the forces of the most vigorous youth, and renders him immortal; and by the latter (or moral) to procure them a Pentagon, which shall restore man to his primitive state of innocence, lost by original sin. The Founder supposes that this Egyptian Masonry was instituted by Enoch and Elias, who propagated it in different parts of the world: however, in time it lost much of its purity and splendour. And so, by degrees, the Masonry of men had been reduced to pure buffoonery; and that of women being almost entirely destroyed, having now for most part no place in common Masonry. Till at last, the zeal of the *Grand Cophta* (so are the High-priests of Egypt named) had signalised itself by restoring the Masonry of both sexes to its pristine lustre.'

With regard to the great question of constructing this invaluable Pentagon, which is to abolish Original Sin: how you have to choose a solitary mountain, and call it Sinai; and build a Pavilion on it to be named Sion, with twelve sides, in every side a window, and three stories, one of which is named Ararat; and there, with Twelve Masters, each at a window, yourself in the middle of them, to go through unspeakable formalities, vigils, removals, fasts, toils, distresses, and hardly get your Pentagon after all,—with regard to this great question and construction, we shall say nothing. As little concerning the still grander and painfuller process of Physical Regeneration, or growing young again; a thing not to be accomplished without a forty-days course of medicine, purgations, sweating-baths, fainting-fits, root-diet, phlebotomy, starvation and desperation, more perhaps than it is all worth. Leaving these interior solemnities, and many high moral precepts of union, virtue, wisdom, and doctrines of immortality and what not, will the reader care to cast an indifferent glance on certain esoteric ceremonial parts of this Egyptian Masonry,—as the Inquisition-Biographer, if we miscellaneously cull from him, may enable us?

'In all these ceremonial parts,' huskily avers the wooden Biographer, 'you find as much sacrilege, profanation, superstition and idolatry, as in common Masonry: invocations of the holy Name, prosternations, adorations lavished on the Venerable, or head of the Lodge; aspirations, insufflations, incense-burnings, fumigations, exorcisms of the Candidates and the garments they are to take; emblems of the sacrosanct Triad, of the Moon, of the Sun, of the Compass, Square, and a thousand-thousand other iniquities and ineptitudes, which are now well known in the world.'

'We above made mention of the Grand Cophta. By this title has been designated the founder or restorer of Egyptian Masonry. Cagliostro made no difficulty in admitting' (to me the Inquisitor) 'that under such name he was himself meant: now in this system the Grand Cophta is compared to the Highest: the most solemn acts of worship are paid him; he has authority over the Angels; he is invoked on all occasions; everything is done in virtue of his power; which you are assured he derives immediately from God. Nay more: among the various rites observed in this exercise of Masonry, you are ordered to recite the *Veni Creator spiritus*, the *Te Deum*, and some Psalms of David: to such an excess is impudence and audacity carried, that in the Psalm, *Memento, Domine, David et omnis mansuetudinis ejus*, every time the name David occurs, that of the Grand Cophta is to be substituted.

'No religion is excluded from the Egyptian Society: the Jew, the

Calvinist, the Lutheran, can be admitted equally well with the Catholic, if so be they admit the existence of God and the immortality of the soul.' 'The men elevated to the rank of master take the names of the ancient Prophets; the women those of the Sibyls.'

* * 'Then the grand Mistress blows on the face of the female Recipiendary, all along from brow to chin, and says: "I give you this breath, to cause to germinate and become alive in your heart the Truth which we possess; to fortify in you the" &c. &c. "Guardian of the new Knowledge which we prepare to make you partake of, by the sacred names of *Helios, Mene, Tetragrammaton.*"

'In the *Essai sur les Illuminés*, printed at Paris in 1789, I read that these latter words were suggested to Cagliostro as Arabic or Sacred ones by a Sleight-of-hand Man, who said that he was assisted by a spirit, and added that this spirit was the Soul of a Cabalist Jew, who by art-magic had killed his pig before the Christian Advent.'

* * 'They take a young lad, or a girl who is in the state of innocence, such they call the *Pupil* or the *Columb;* the Venerable communicates to him the power he would have had before the Fall of Man; which power consists mainly in commanding the pure Spirits; these Spirits are to the number of seven: it is said they surround the Throne; and that they govern the Seven Planets: their names are Anael, Michael, Raphael, Gabriel, Uriel, Zobiachel, Anachiel.'

Or would the reader wish to see this *Columb* in action? She can act in two ways; either behind a curtain, behind a hieroglyphically-painted Screen with 'table and three candles;' or as here 'before the Caraffe,' and showing face. If the miracle fail, it can only be because she is not 'in the state of innocence,'—an accident much to be guarded against. This scene is at Mittau in Courland;—we find, indeed, that it is a *Pupil* affair, not a *Columb* one; but for the rest, that is perfectly indifferent:

'Cagliostro accordingly (it is his own story still) brought a little Boy into the Lodge; son of a nobleman there. He placed him on his knees before a table, whereon stood a Bottle of pure water, and behind this some lighted candles: he made an exorcism round the Boy, put his hand on his head: and both, in this attitude, addressed their prayers to God for the happy accomplishment of the work. Having then bid the child look into the Bottle, directly the child cried that he saw a garden. Knowing hereby that Heaven assisted him, Cagliostro took courage, and bade the child ask of God the grace to see the Angel Michael. At first the child said: "I see something white; I know not what it is." Then he began jumping, stamping like a possessed creature, and cried: "There now! I

see a child, like myself, that seems to have something angelical." All the assembly, and Cagliostro himself, remained speechless with emotion. * * * The child being anew exorcised, with the hands of the Venerable on his head, and the customary prayers addressed to Heaven, he looked into the Bottle, and said, he saw his Sister at that moment coming down stairs, and embracing one of her brothers. That appeared impossible, the brother in question being then hundreds of miles off: however, Cagliostro felt not disconcerted; said they might send to the country-house where the sister was, and see.'[3]

Wonderful enough. Here, however, a fact rather suddenly transpires, which, as the Inquisition-Biographer well urges, must serve to undeceive all believers in Cagliostro; at least, call a blush into their cheeks. It seems: 'The Grand Cophta, the restorer, the 'propagator of Egyptian Masonry, Count Cagliostro himself, 'testifies, in most part of his System, the profoundest respect for 'the Patriarch Moses: *and yet* this same Cagliostro affirmed before 'his judges that he had always felt the insurmountablest antipathy 'to Moses; and attributes this hatred to his constant opinion, that 'Moses was a thief for having carried-off the Egyptian vessels; 'which opinion, in spite of all the luminous arguments that were 'opposed to him to show how erroneous it was, he has continued to 'hold with an invincible obstinacy!' How reconcile these two inconsistencies? Ay, how?

But to finish-off this Egyptian Masonic business, and bring it all to a focus, we shall now, for the first and for the last time, peep one moment through the spyglass of Monsieur de Luchet, in that *Essai sur les Illuminés* of his. The whole matter being so much of a chimera, how can it be painted otherwise than chimerically? Of the following passage one thing is true, that a creature of the seed of Adam believed it to be true. List, list, then; O list!

'The Recipiendary is led by a darksome path, into an immense hall, the ceiling, the walls, the floor of which are covered by a black cloth, sprinkled over with red flames and menacing serpents: three sepulchral lamps emit, from time to time, a dying glimmer; and the eye half distinguishes, in this lugubrious den, certain wrecks of mortality suspended by funereal crapes: a heap of skeletons forms in the centre a sort of altar; on both sides of it are piled books; some contain menaces against the perjured; others the deadly narrative of the vengeances which the

[3] *Vie de Joseph Balsamo, traduite d'après l'original Italien*, ch. ii. iii. (Paris, 1791.)

Invisible Spirit has exacted; of the infernal evocations for a long time pronounced in vain.

'Eight hours elapse. Then Phantoms, trailing mortuary veils, slowly cross the hall, and sink in caverns, without audible noise of trap-doors or of falling. You notice only that they are gone, by a fetid odour exhaled from them.

'The Novice remains four-and-twenty hours in this gloomy abode, in the midst of a freezing silence. A rigorous fast has already weakened his thinking faculties. Liquors, prepared for the purpose, first weary, and at length wear-out his senses. At his feet are placed three cups, filled with a drink of greenish colour. Necessity lifts them towards his lips: involuntary fear repels them.

'At last appear two men; looked upon as the ministers of death. These gird the pale brow of the Recipiendary with an auroral-coloured riband, dipt in blood, and full of silvered characters mixed with the figure of Our Lady of Loretto. He receives a copper crucifix, of two inches length; to his neck are hung a sort of amulets, wrapped in violet cloth. He is stript of his clothes; which two ministering brethren deposit on a funeral pile, erected at the other end of the hall. With blood, on his naked body, are traced crosses. In this state of suffering and humiliation, he sees approaching with large strides five Phantoms, armed with swords, and clad in garments dropping blood. Their faces are veiled: they spread a carpet on the floor; kneel there; pray; and remain with outstretched hands crossed on their breast, and face fixed on the ground, in deep silence. An hour passes in this painful attitude. After which fatiguing trial, plaintive cries are heard; the funeral pile takes fire, yet casts only a pale light; the garments are thrown on it and burnt. A colossal and almost transparent Figure rises from the very bosom of the pile. At sight of it, the five prostrated men fall into convulsions insupportable to look on; the too faithful image of those foaming struggles wherein a mortal, at handgrips with a sudden pain, ends by sinking under it.

'Then a trembling voice pierces the vault, and articulates the formula of those execrable oaths that are to be sworn: my pen falters; I think myself almost guilty to retrace them.'

O Luchet, what a taking! Is there no hope left, thinkest thou? Thy brain is all gone to addled albumen; help seems none, if not in that last mother's-bosom of all the ruined: Brandy-and-water! —An unfeeling world may laugh; but ought to recollect that, forty years ago, these things were sad realities,—in the heads of many men.

As to the execrable oaths, this seems the main one: 'Honour

'and respect *Aqua Toffana*, as a sure, prompt and necessary means 'of purging the Globe, by the death or the hebetation of such as 'endeavour to debase the Truth, or snatch it from our hands.' And so the catastrophe ends by bathing our poor half-dead Recipiendary first in blood, then, after some genuflexions, in water; and 'serving him a repast composed of roots,'—we grieve to say, mere potatoes-and-point!

Figure now all this boundless cunningly devised Agglomerate of royal-arches, death's-heads, hieroglyphically painted screens, *Columbs* in the state of innocence; with spacious masonic halls, dark, or in the favourablest theatrical light-and-dark; Kircher's magic-lantern, Belshazzar hand-writings, of phosphorus: 'plaintive tones,' gong-beatings; hoary beard of a supernatural Grand Cophta emerging from the gloom;—and how it acts, not only indirectly through the foolish senses of men, but directly on their Imagination; connecting itself with Enoch and Elias, with Philanthropy, Immortality, Eleutheromania, and Adam Weisshaupt's Illuminati, and so downwards to the infinite Deep: figure all this; and in the centre of it, sitting eager and alert, the skilfulest Panourgos, working the mighty chaos, into a creation—of ready-money. In such a wide plastic ocean of sham and foam had the Archquack now happily begun to envelop himself.

Accordingly he goes forth prospering and to prosper. Arrived in any City, he has but by masonic grip to accredit himself with the Venerable of the place; and, not by degrees as formerly, but in a single night, is introduced in Grand Lodge to all that is fattest and foolishest far or near; and in the fittest arena, a gilt-pasteboard Masonic hall. There between the two pillars of Jachin and Boaz, can the great Sheepstealer see his whole flock of Dupeables assembled in one penfold; affectionately blatant, licking the hand they are to bleed by. Victorious Acharat-Beppo! The genius of Amazement, moreover, has now shed her glory round him; he is radiant-headed, a supernatural by his very gait. Behold him everywhere welcomed with vivats, or in awestruck silence: gilt-pasteboard Freemasons receive him under the Steel-Arch of crossed sabres; he mounts to the Seat of the Venerable; holds high discourse hours long, on Masonry, Morality, Universal Science, Divinity, and Things in general, with 'a sublimity, an emphasis and unction,' proceeding, it appears, 'from the special inspiration of the Holy Ghost.' Then there are Egyptian Lodges to be

founded, corresponded with,—a thing involving expense; elementary fractions of many a priceless arcanum, nay if the place will stand it, of the Pentagon itself, can be given to the purified in life: how gladly would he *give* them, but they have to be brought from the uttermost ends of the world, and cost money. Now too, with what tenfold impetuosity do all the old trades of Egyptian Drops, Beauty-waters, Secret-favours, expand themselves, and rise in price! Life-weary moneyed Donothing, this seraphic Countess is Grand Priestess of the Egyptian Female Lodges; has a touch of the supramundane Undine in her: among all thy intrigues, hadst thou ever yet Endymion-like an intrigue with the lunar Diana,—called also Hecate? And thou, O antique, much-loving faded Dowager, *this* Squire-of-dames can, it appears probable, command the Seven Angels, Uriel, Anachiel and Company; at lowest, has the eyes of all Europe fixed on him!—The dog pockets money enough, and can seem to despise money.

To us, much meditating on the matter, it seemed perhaps strangest of all, how Count Cagliostro, received under the Steel Arch, could hold Discourses, of from one to three hours long, on Universal Science, of such unction, we do not say as to seem inspired by the Holy Spirit, but as not to get him lugged out of doors directly after his first head of method, and drowned in whole oceans of salt-and-water. The man could not speak; only babble in long-winded diffusions, chaotic circumvolutions tending nowhither. He had no thought for speaking with; he had not even a language. His Sicilian Italian, and Laquais-de-place French, garnished with shreds from all European dialects, was wholly intelligible to no mortal; a Tower-of-Babel jargon, which made many think him a kind of Jew. But indeed, with the language of Greeks, or of Angels, what better were it? The man, once for all, has no articulate utterance; that tongue of his emits noises enough, but no speech. Let him begin the plainest story, his stream stagnates at the first stage; chafes, "ahem! ahem!" loses itself in the earth; or, bursting over, flies abroad without bank or channel,—into separate plashes. Not a stream, but a lake, a widespread indefinite marsh. His whole thought is confused, inextricable; what thought, what resemblance of thought he has, cannot deliver itself, except in gasps, blustering gushes, spasmodic refluences, which make bad worse. Bubble, bubble, toil and trouble: how thou bubblest, foolish 'Bubblyjock'! Hear him once, and on a dead-lift occasion, as the Inquisition Gurney reports it:

'"I mean and I wish to mean, that even as those who honour their father and mother, and respect the sovereign Pontiff, are blessed of God; even so all that I did, I did it by the order of God, with the power which he vouchsafed to me, and to the advantage of God and of Holy Church; and I mean to give the proofs of all that I have done and said, not only physically but morally, by showing that as I have served God for God and by the power of God, he has given me at last the counter-poison to confound and combat Hell; for I know no other enemies than those that are in Hell, and if I am wrong, the Holy Father will punish me; if I am right, he will reward me; and if the Holy Father could get into his hands tonight these answers of mine, I predict to all brethren, believers and unbelievers, that I should be at liberty tomorrow morning." Being desired to give these proofs then, he answered: "To prove that I have been chosen of God as an apostle to defend and propagate religion, I say that as the Holy Church has instituted pastors to demonstrate in face of the world that she is the true Catholic faith, even so, having operated with approbation and by the counsel of pastors of the Holy Church, I am, as I said, fully justified in regard to all my operations; and these pastors have assured me that my Egyptian Order was divine, and deserved to be formed into an Order sanctioned by the Holy Father, as I said in another interrogatory."'

How then, in the name of wonder, said we, could such a babbling, bubbling Turkey-cock speak 'with unction'?

Two things here are to be taken into account. First, the difference between speaking and public speaking; a difference altogether generic. Secondly, the wonderful power of a certain audacity, often named impudence. Was it never thy hard fortune, good Reader, to attend any Meeting convened for Public purposes; any Bible-Society, Reform, Conservative, Thatched-Tavern, Hogg Dinner, or other such Meeting? Thou hast seen some full-fed Long-ear, by free determination or on sweet constraint, start to his legs, and give voice. Well aware wert thou that there was not, had not been, could not be, in that entire ass-cranium of his any fraction of an idea: nevertheless mark him. If at first an ominous haze flit round, and nothing, not even nonsense, dwell in his recollection,—heed it not; let him but plunge desperately on, the spell is broken. Commonplaces enough are at hand: 'labour of love,' 'rights of suffering millions,' 'throne and altar,' 'divine gift of song,' or what else it may be; the Meeting, by its very *name*, has environed itself in a given element of Commonplace. But anon, behold how his talking-organs get heated, and the friction

vanishes; cheers, applauses, with the previous dinner and strong drink, raise him to height of noblest temper. And now, as for your vociferous Dullard, is easiest of all, let him keep on the soft, safe *parallel* course; parallel to the Truth, or nearly so; for Heaven's sake, not in *contact* with it; no obstacle will meet him; on the favouring given element of Commonplace he triumphantly careers.

He is as the ass, whom you took and cast headlong into the water: the water at first threatens to swallow him; but he finds, to his astonishment, that he can *swim* therein, that it is buoyant and bears him along. One sole condition is indispensable: audacity, vulgarly called impudence. Our ass must *commit* himself to his watery 'element;' in free daring, strike-forth his four limbs from him: then shall he not drown and sink, but shoot gloriously forward, and swim, to the admiration of bystanders. The ass, safe landed on the other bank, shakes his rough hide, wonder-struck himself at the faculty that lay in him, and waves joyfully his long ears: so too the public speaker. Cagliostro, as we know him of old, is not without a certain blubbery oiliness of soul as of body, with vehemence lying under it; has the volublest, noisiest tongue; and in the audacity vulgarly called impudence is without a fellow. The Commonplaces of such Steel-Arch Meetings are soon at his finger-ends: that same blubbery oiliness, and vehemence lying under it, once give them an element and stimulus, are the very gift of a fluent public speaker—to Dupeables.

Here too let us mention a circumstance, not insignificant, if true, which it may readily enough be. In younger years, Beppo Balsamo once, it is recorded, took some pains to procure, 'from a country vicar,' under quite false pretences, 'a bit of cotton steeped in holy oils.' What could such bit of cotton steeped in holy oils do for him? An Unbeliever from any basis of conviction the unbelieving Beppo could never be; but solely from stupidity and bad morals. Might there not lie in that chaotic blubbery nature of his, at the bottom of all, a certain musk-grain of real Superstitious Belief? How wonderfully such a musk-grain of Belief will flavour, and impregnate with seductive odour, a whole inward world of Quackery, so that every fibre thereof shall smell *musk*, is well known. No Quack can persuade like him who has himself some persuasion. Nay, so wondrous is the act of Believing, Deception and Self-deception must, rigorously speaking, coexist in all Quacks; and he perhaps were definable as the best Quack,

in whom the smallest musk-grain of the latter would sufficiently flavour the largest mass of the former.

But indeed, as we know otherwise, was there not in Cagliostro a certain pinchbeck counterfeit of all that is golden and good in man, of somewhat even that is best? Cheers, and illuminated hieroglyphs, and the ravishment of thronging audiences, can make him maudlin; his very wickedness of practice will render him louder in eloquence of theory; and 'philanthropy,' 'divine science,' 'depth of unknown worlds,' 'finer feelings of the heart,' and suchlike shall draw tears from most asses of sensibility. Neither, indeed, is it of moment how *few* his elementary Commonplaces are, how empty his head is, so he but agitate it well: thus a lead-drop or two, put into the emptiest dry-bladder, and jingled to and fro, will make noise enough; and even, if skilfully jingled, a kind of martial music.

Such is the Cagliostric palaver, that bewitches all manner of believing souls. If the ancient Father was named Chrysostom, or Mouth-of-Gold, be the modern Quack named Pinchbeckostom, or Mouth-of-Pinchbeck; in an Age of Bronze such metal finds elective affinities. On the whole, too, it is worth considering what element your Quack specially works in: the element of Wonder! The Genuine, be he artist or artisan, works in the finitude of the Known; the Quack in the infinitude of the Unknown. And then how, in rapidest progression, he grows and advances, once start him! Your name is up, says the adage; you may lie in bed. A nimbus of renown and preternatural astonishment envelops Cagliostro; enchants the general eye. The few reasoning mortals scattered here and there who see through him, deafened in the universal hubbub, shut their lips in sorrowful disdain; confident in the grand remedy, Time. The Enchanter meanwhile rolls on his way; what boundless materials of Deceptibility, what greediness and ignorance, especially what prurient brute-mindedness, exist over Europe in this the most deceivable of modern ages, are stirred up, fermenting in his behoof. He careers onward as a Comet; his nucleus, of paying and praising Dupes, embraces, in long radius, what city and province he rests over; his thinner tail, of wondering and curious Dupes, stretches into remotest lands. Good Lavater, from amid his Swiss Mountains, could say of him: 'Cagliostro, a man; and a man such as few 'are; in whom, however, I am not a believer. O that he were 'simple of heart and humble, like a child; that he had feeling for 'the simplicity of the Gospel, and the majesty of the Lord (*Hoheit 'des Herrn*)! Who were so great as he? Cagliostro often tells

'what is not true, and promises what he does not perform. Yet do 'I nowise hold his operations as deception, though they are not 'what he calls them.'[4] If good Lavater could so say of him, what must others have been saying!

Comet-wise, progressing with loud flourish of kettle-drums, everywhere under the Steel-Arch evoking spirits, transmuting metals (to such as could stand it), the Archquack has traversed Saxony; at Leipzig has run athwart the hawser of a brother quack (poor Schröpfer, here scarcely recognisable as '*Sciefert*'), and wrecked him. Through Eastern Germany, Prussian Poland, he progresses; and so now at length, in the spring of 1780, has arrived at Petersburg. His pavilion is erected here, his flag prosperously hoisted: Mason-lodges have long ears; he is distributing, as has now become his wont, Spagiric Food, medicine for the poor; a train-oil Prince, Potemkin or something like him, for accounts are dubious, feels his chops water over a seraphic Seraphina: all goes merry, and promises the best. But in those despotic countries, the Police is so arbitrary! Cagliostro's thaumaturgy must be overhauled by the Empress's Physician (Mouncey, a hard Annandale Scot); is found nought, the Spagiric Food unfit for a dog: and so, the whole particulars of his Lordship's conduct being put together, the result is, that he must leave Petersburg, in a given brief term of hours. Happy for him that it was so brief: scarcely is he gone, till the Prussian Ambassador appears with a complaint, that he has falsely assumed the Prussian uniform at Rome; the Spanish Ambassador with a still graver complaint, that he has forged bills at Cadiz. However, he is safe over the marches: let them complain their fill.

In Courland, and in Poland, great things await him; yet not unalloyed by two small reverses. The famed Countess von der Recke, a born Fair Saint, what the Germans call *Schöne Seele*, as yet quite young in heart and experience, but broken down with grief for departed friends,—seeks to question the world-famous Spirit-summoner on the secrets of the Invisible Kingdoms; whither, with fond strained eyes, she is incessantly looking. The *galimathias* of Pinchbeckostom cannot impose on this pure-minded simple woman: she recognises the Quack in him, and in a printed Book makes known the same: Mephisto's mortifying experience with Margaret, as above foretold, renews itself for Cagliostro.[5] At

[4] *Lettre du Comte Mirabeau sur Cagliostro et Lavater*, p. 42. (Berl. 1786.)

[5] *Zeitgenossen*, No. 15. § *Frau von der Recke.*

Warsaw too, though he discourses on Egyptian Masonry, on Medical Philosophy, and the ignorance of Doctors, and performs successfully with *Pupil* and *Columb*, a certain 'Count M.' cherishes more than doubt; which ends in certainty, in a written *Cagliostro Unmasked*. The Archquack, triumphant, sumptuously feasted in the city, has retired with a chosen set of believers, with whom, however, was this unbelieving 'M.,' into the country; to transmute metals, to prepare perhaps the Pentagon itself. All that night, before leaving Warsaw, 'our dear Master' had spent conversing with spirits. Spirits? cries 'M.:' Not he; but melting ducats: he has a melted mass of them in this crucible, which now, by sleight of hand, he would fain substitute for that other, filled, as you all saw, with red-lead, carefully luted down, smelted, set to cool, smuggled from among our hands, and now (look at it, ye asses!)—found broken and hidden among these bushes!

Neither does the Pentagon, or Elixir of Life, or whatever it was, prosper better. 'Our sweet Master enters into expostulation:' 'swears by his great God, and his honour, that he will finish the 'work and make us happy. He carries his modesty so far as to 'propose that he shall work with chains on his feet; and consents to 'lose his life, by the hands of his disciples, if before the end of the '*fourth passage*, his word be not made good. He lays his hand on 'the ground, and kisses it; holds it up to Heaven, and again takes 'God to witness that he speaks true; calls on Him to exterminate 'him if he lies.' A vision of the hoary-bearded Grand Cophta himself makes night solemn. In vain! The sherds of that broken red-lead crucible, which pretends to stand here unbroken half-full of silver, lie *there*, before your eyes: that 'resemblance of a sleeping child,' grown visible in the magic cooking of our Elixir, proves to be an inserted rosemary-leaf; the Grand Cophta cannot be gone too soon.

Count 'M.,' balancing towards the opposite extreme, even thinks him inadequate as a Quack:

'Far from being modest,' says this Unmasker, 'he brags beyond expression, in anybody's presence, especially in women's, of the grand faculties he possesses. Every word is an exaggeration, or a statement you feel to be improbable. The smallest contradiction puts him in fury: his vanity breaks through on all sides; he lets you give him a festival that sets the whole city a-talking. Most impostors are supple, and endeavour to gain friends. This one, you might say, studies to appear arrogant, to make all men enemies, by his rude injurious speeches, by the squabbles

and grudges he introduces among friends.' 'He quarrels with his coadjutors for trifles; fancies that a simple giving of the lie will persuade the public that they are liars.' 'Schröpfer at Leipzig was far cleverer.' 'He should get some ventriloquist for assistant: should read some Books of Chemistry; study the Tricks of Philadelphia and Comus.'[6]

Fair advices, good 'M.;' but do not you yourself admit that he has a 'natural genius for deception;' above all things 'a forehead 'of brass (*front d' airain*), which nothing can disconcert?' To such a genius, and such a brow, Comus and Philadelphia, and all the ventriloquists in Nature, can add little. Give the Archquack his due. These arrogancies of his prove only that he is mounted on his high horse, and has now the world under him.

Such reverses, which will occur in the lot of every man, are, for our Cagliostro, but as specks in the blaze of the meridian Sun. With undimmed lustre he is, as heretofore, handed-over from this 'Prince P.' to that Prince Q.; among which high believing potentates, what is an incredulous 'Count M.'? His pockets are distended with ducats and diamonds: he is off to Vienna, to Frankfort, to Strasburg, by extra post; and there also will work miracles. 'The 'train he commonly took with him,' says the Inquisition-Biographer, 'corresponded to the rest; he always travelled post, with a con-'siderable suite: couriers, lackeys, body-servants, domestics of all 'sorts, sumptuously dressed, gave an air of reality to the high birth 'he vaunted. The very liveries he got made at Paris cost twenty '*louis* each. Apartments furnished in the height of the mode; a 'magnificent table, open to numerous guests; rich dresses for him-'self and his wife, corresponded to this luxurious way of life. His 'feigned generosity likewise made a great noise. Often he gratuit-'ously doctored the poor, and even gave them alms.'[7]

In the inside of all this splendid travelling and lodging economy are to be seen, as we know, two suspicious-looking rouged or unrouged figures, of a Count and a Countess; lolling on their cushions there, with a jaded, haggard kind of aspect; they eye one another sullenly, in silence, with a scarce-suppressed indignation; for each thinks the other does not work enough and eats too much. Whether Dame Lorenza followed her peculiar side of the business with reluctance or with free alacrity, is a moot-point among Biographers: not so that, with her choleric adipose Archquack,

[6] *Cagliostro démasqué à Varsovie, en* 1780, pp. 35 et seq. (Paris, 1786.)
[7] *Vie de Joseph Balsamo*, p. 41.

she had a sour life of it, and brawling abounded. If we look still farther inwards, and try to penetrate the inmost self-consciousness, what in another man would be called the conscience, of the Arch-quack himself, the view gets most uncertain; little or nothing to be seen but a thick fallacious haze. Which indeed *was* the main thing extant there. Much in the Count Front-d'airain remains dubious; yet hardly this: his want of clear insight into anything, most of all into his own inner man. Cunning in the supreme degree he has; intellect next to none. Nay, is not cunning (couple it with an esurient character) the natural consequence of *defective* intellect? It is properly the vehement exercise of a short, poor vision; of an intellect sunk, bemired; which can attain to no free vision, otherwise it would lead the esurient man to be honest.

Meanwhile gleams of muddy light will occasionally visit all mortals; every living creature (according to Milton, the very Devil) has some more or less faint resemblance of a Conscience; must make inwardly certain auricular confessions, absolutions, professions of faith,—were it only that he does not yet quite loathe, and so proceed to hang himself. What such a Porcus as Cagliostro might specially feel, and think, and *be*, were difficult in any case to say; much more when contradiction and mystification, designed and unavoidable, so involve the matter. One of the most authentic documents preserved of him is the Picture of his Visage. An Effigies once universally diffused; in oil-paint, aquatint, marble, stucco, and perhaps gingerbread, decorating millions of apartments: of which remarkable Effigies one copy, engraved in the line-manner, happily still lies here. Fittest of visages; worthy to be worn by the Quack of Quacks! A most portentous face of scoundrelism: a fat, snub, abominable face; dew-lapped, flat-nosed, greasy, full of greediness, sensuality, oxlike obstinacy; a forehead impudent, refusing to be ashamed; and then two eyes turned up seraphically languishing, as in divine contemplation and adoration; a touch of quiz too: on the whole, perhaps the most perfect quack-face produced by the eighteenth century. There he sits, and seraphically languishes, with this epigraph:

De l'Ami des Humains reconnaissez les traits:
Tous ses jours sont marqués par de nouveaux bienfaits,
Il prolonge la vie, il secourt l'indigence;
Le plaisir d'être utile est seul sa récompense.

A probable conjecture were, that this same Theosophy, Theophilanthropy, Solacement of the Poor, to which our Archquack now more and more betook himself, might serve not only as bird-lime for external game, but also half-unconsciously as salve for assuaging his own spiritual sores. Am not I a charitable man? could the Archquack say: if I have erred myself, have I not, by theosophic unctuous discourses, removed much cause of error? The lying, the quackery, what are these but the method of accommodating yourself to the temper of men; of getting their ear, their dull long ear, which Honesty had no chance to catch? Nay, at worst, is not this an unjust world; full of nothing but beasts of prey, four-footed or two-footed? Nature has commanded, saying: Man, help thyself. Ought not the man of my genius, since he was not born a Prince, since in these scandalous times he has not been elected a Prince, to make himself one? If not by open violence, for which he wants military force, then surely by superior science,—exercised in a private way. Heal the diseases of the Poor, the far deeper diseases of the Ignorant; in a word, found Egyptian Lodges, and get the means of founding them.—By such soliloquies can Count Front-of-brass Pinchbeckostom, in rare atrabiliar hours of self-questioning, compose himself. For the rest, such hours are rare: the Count is a man of action and digestion, not of self-questioning; usually the day brings its abundant task; there is no time for abstractions,—of the metaphysical sort.

Be this as it may, the Count has arrived at Strasburg; is working higher wonders than ever. At Strasburg, indeed, in the year 1783, occurs his apotheosis; what we can call the culmination and Fourth Act of his Life-drama. He was here for a number of months; in full blossom and radiance, the envy and admiration of the world. In large hired hospitals, he with open drug-box containing 'Extract of Saturn,' and even with open purse, relieves the suffering poor; unfolds himself lamb-like, angelic to a believing few, of the rich classes; turns a silent minatory lion-face to unbelievers, were they of the richest. Medical miracles have in all times been common: but what miracle is this of an Oriental or Occidental Serene-Excellence, who, 'regardless of expense,' employs himself not in preserving game, but in curing sickness, in illuminating ignorance? Behold how he dives, at noonday, into the infectious hovels of the mean; and on the equipages, haughtinesses, and even dinner-invitations of the great, turns only his

negatory front-of-brass! The Prince Cardinal de Rohan, Archbishop of Strasburg, first-class peer of France, of the Blood-royal of Brittany, intimates a wish to see him; he answers: "If Monseigneur the Cardinal is sick, let him come, and I will cure him; if he is well, he has no need of me, I none of him."[8]

Heaven meanwhile has sent him a few disciples: by a nice tact, he knows his man; to one speaks only of Spagiric Medicine, Downfall of Tyranny, and the Egyptian Lodge; to another, of quite high matters, beyond this diurnal sphere, of visits from the Angel of Light, visits from him of Darkness; passing a Statue of Christ, he will pause with a wondrously accented plaintive "Ha!" as of recognition, as of thousand-years remembrance; and when questioned, sink into mysterious silence. *Is* he the Wandering Jew, then? Heaven knows! At Strasburg, in a word, Fortune not only smiles but laughs upon him: as crowning favour, he finds here the richest, inflammablest, most open-handed Dupe ever yet vouchsafed him; no other than that same many-titled Louis de Rohan; strong in whose favour, he can laugh again at Fortune.

Let the curious reader look at him, for an instant or two, through the eyes of two eye-witnesses: the Abbé Georgel, Prince Louis's diplomatic Factotum, and Herr Meiners, the Göttingen Professor:

'Admitted at length,' says our too-prosing Jesuit Abbé, 'to the sanctuary of this Æsculapius, Prince Louis saw, according to his own account, in the incommunicative man's physiognomy, something so dignified, so imposing, that he felt penetrated with a religious awe, and reverence dictated his address. Their interview, which was brief, excited more keenly than ever his desire of farther acquaintance. He attained it at length: and the crafty empiric graduated so cunningly his words and procedure, that he gained, without appearing to court it, the Cardinal's entire confidence, and the greatest ascendency over his will. "Your soul," said he one day to the Prince, "is worthy of mine; you deserve to be made participator of all my secrets." Such an avowal captivated the whole faculties, intellectual and moral, of a man who at all times had hunted after secrets of alchymy and botany. From this moment their union became intimate and public: Cagliostro went and established himself at Saverne, while his Eminency was residing there; their solitary interviews were long and frequent.' * * 'I remember once, having learnt, by a sure way, that Baron de Planta (his Eminency's man of affairs) had frequent, most expensive orgies, in the Archiepiscopal Palace,

[8] *Mémoires de l'Abbé Georgel*, ii. 48.

where Tokay wine ran like water, to regale Cagliostro and his pretended wife, I thought it my duty to inform the Cardinal: his answer was, "I know it; I have even authorised him to commit abuses, if he judge fit."' * * 'He came at last to have no other will than Cagliostro's: and to such a length had it gone, that this sham Egyptian, finding it good to quit Strasburg for a time, and retire into Switzerland, the Cardinal, apprised thereof, despatched his Secretary as well to attend him, as to obtain Predictions from him; such were transmitted in cipher to the Cardinal on every point he needed to consult of.'[9]—

'Before ever I arrived in Strasburg' (hear now the as prosing Protestant Professor), 'I knew almost to a certainty that I should not see Count Cagliostro; at least, not get to speak with him. From many persons I had heard that he, on no account, received visits from curious Travellers, in a state of health; that such as, without being sick, appeared in his audiences were sure to be treated by him, in the brutalest way, as spies.' * * 'Nevertheless, though I saw not this new god of Physic near at hand and deliberately, but only for a moment as he rolled on in a rapid carriage, I fancy myself to be better acquainted with him than many that have lived in his society for months.' 'My unavoidable conviction is, that Count Cagliostro, from of old, has been more of a cheat than an enthusiast; and also that he continues a cheat to this day.

'As to his country I have ascertained nothing. Some make him a Spaniard, others a Jew, or an Italian, or a Ragusan; or even an Arab, who had persuaded some Asiatic Prince to send his son to travel in Europe, and then murdered the youth, and taken possession of his treasures. As the self-styled Count speaks badly all the languages you hear from him, and has most likely spent the greater part of his life under feigned names far from home, it is probable enough no sure trace of his origin may ever be discovered.'

'On his first appearance in Strasburg he connected himself with the Freemasons; but only till he felt strong enough to stand on his own feet: he soon gained the favour of the Prætor and the Cardinal; and through these the favour of the Court, to such a degree that his adversaries cannot so much as think of overthrowing him. With the Prætor and Cardinal he is said to demean himself as with persons who were under boundless obligation to him, to whom he was under none: the equipage of the Cardinal he seems to use as freely as his own. He pretends that he can recognise Atheists or Blasphemers by the smell; that the vapour from such throws him into epileptic fits; into which sacred disorder he, like a true juggler, has the art of falling when he likes. In public he no longer vaunts of rule over spirits, or other magical arts; but I know, even as certainly, that he still pretends to evoke spirits, and by their help and

[9] Georgel, *ubi supra*.

apparition to heal diseases, as I know this other fact, that he understands no more of the human system, or the nature of its diseases, or the use of the commonest therapeutic methods, than any other quack.'

'According to the crediblest accounts of persons who have long observed him, he is a man to an inconceivable degree choleric (*heftig*), heedless, inconstant; and therefore doubtless it was the happiest idea he ever in his whole life came upon, this of making himself inaccessible; of raising the most obstinate reserve as a bulwark round him; without which precaution he must long ago have been caught at fault.

'For his own labour he takes neither payment nor present: when presents are made him of such a sort as cannot without offence be refused, he forthwith returns some counter-present, of equal or still higher value. Nay he not only takes nothing from his patients, but frequently admits them, months long, to his house and his table, and will not consent to the smallest recompense. With all this disinterestedness (conspicuous enough, as you may suppose), he lives in an expensive way, plays deep, loses almost constantly to ladies; so that, according to the very lowest estimate, he must require at least 20,000 livres a-year. The darkness which Cagliostro has, on purpose, spread over the sources of his income and outlay, contributes even more than his munificence and miraculous cures to the notion that he is a divine extraordinary man, who has watched Nature in her deepest operations, and among other secrets stolen that of Gold-making from her.' * * 'With a mixture of sorrow and indignation over our age, I have to record that this man has found acceptance, not only among the great, who from of old have been the easiest bewitched by such, but also with many of the learned, and even physicians and naturalists.'[10]

Halcyon days; only too good to continue! All glory runs its course; has its culmination, and then its often precipitous decline. Eminency Rohan, with fervid temper and small instruction, perhaps of dissolute, certainly of dishonest manners, in whom the faculty of Wonder had attained such prodigious development, was indeed the very stranded whale for jackals to feed on: unhappily, however, no one jackal could long be left in solitary possession of him. A sharper-toothed she-jackal now strikes-in; bites infinitely deeper; stranded whale and he-jackal both are like to become her prey. A young French Mantua-maker, 'Countess de La Motte-Valois, descended from Henri II. by the bastard line,' without Extract of Saturn, Egyptian Masonry, or any *verbal* conference with Dark Angels,—has genius enough to get her finger in the Archquack's

[10] Meiners: *Briefe über die Schweiz* (as quoted in *Mirabeau*).

rich Hermetic Projection, appropriate the golden proceeds, and even finally break the crucible. Prince Cardinal Louis de Rohan is off to Paris, under her guidance, to see the long-invisible Queen, or Queen's *Apparition;* to pick up the Rose in the Garden of Trianon, dropt by her fair sham-royal hand; and then—descend rapidly to the Devil, and drag Cagliostro along with him.

The intelligent reader observes, we have now arrived at that stupendous business of the *Diamond Necklace:* into the dark complexities of which we need not here do more than glance: who knows but, next month, our Historical Chapter, written specially on this subject, may itself see the light? Enough, for the present, if we fancy vividly the poor whale Cardinal, so deep in the adventure that Grand-Cophtic 'predictions transmitted in cipher' will no longer illuminate him; but the Grand Cophta must leave all masonic or other business, happily begun in Naples, Bordeaux, Lyons, and come personally to Paris with predictions at first hand. 'The new Calchas,' says poor Abbé Georgel, 'must have read the 'entrails of his victim ill; for, on issuing from these communications 'with the Angel of Light and of Darkness, he prophesied to the 'Cardinal that this happy correspondence,' with the Queen's Similitude, 'would place him at the highest point of favour; that his 'influence in the Government would soon become paramount; that 'he would use it for the propagation of good principles, the glory 'of the Supreme Being, and the happiness of Frenchmen.' The new Calchas was indeed at fault: but how could he be otherwise? Let these high Queen's-favours, and all terrestrial shiftings of the wind, turn as they will, *his* reign, he can well see, is appointed to be temporary; in the mean while, Tokay flows like water; prophecies of good, not of evil, are the method to keep it flowing. Thus if, for Circe de La Motte-Valois, the Egyptian Masonry is but a foolish enchanted cup wherewith to turn her fat Cardinal into a quadruped, she herself converse-wise, for the Grand Cophta, is one who must ever fodder said quadruped with Court hopes, and stall-feed him fatter and fatter,—it is expected, for the knife of *both* parties. They are mutually useful; live in peace, and Tokay festivity, though mutually suspicious, mutually contemptuous. So stand matters through the spring and summer months of the year 1785.

But fancy next that,—while Tokay is flowing within doors, and abroad Egyptian Lodges are getting founded, and gold and glory, from Paris as from other cities, supernaturally coming in,—the

latter end of August has arrived, and with it Commissary Chesnon, to lodge the whole unholy Brotherhood, from Cardinal down to Sham-queen, in separate cells of the Bastille! There, for nine long months, let them howl and wail, in bass or in treble; and emit the falsest of false *Mémoires;* among which that *Mémoire pour le Comte de Cagliostro, en présence des autres Co-Accusés,* with its Trebisond Acharats, Scherifs of Mecca, and Nature's unfortunate Child, all gravely printed with French types in the year 1786, may well bear the palm. Fancy that Necklace or Diamonds will nowhere unearth themselves; that the Tuileries Palace sits struck with astonishment and speechless chagrin; that Paris, that all Europe, is ringing with the wonder. That Count Front-of-brass Pinchbeckostom, confronted, at the judgment-bar, with a shrill glib Circe de La Motte, has need of all his eloquence; that nevertheless the Front-of-brass prevails, and exasperated Circe 'throws a candlestick at him.' Finally, that on the 31st of May 1786, the assembled Parliament of Paris, 'at nine in the evening, after a sitting of eighteen hours,' has solemnly pronounced judgment: and now that Cardinal Louis is gone 'to his estates;' Countess de La Motte is shaven on the head, branded, with red-hot iron, 'V' (*Voleuse*) on both shoulders, and confined for life to the Salpêtrière; her Count wandering uncertain, with diamonds for sale, over the British Empire; that the Sieur de Villette, for handling a queen's pen, is banished forever; the too-queenlike Demoiselle Gay d'Oliva (with her unfathered infant) 'put out of Court;'—and Grand Cophta Cagliostro liberated indeed, but pillaged, and ordered forthwith to take himself away. His disciples illuminate their windows; but what does that avail? Commissary Chesnon, Bastille-Governor De Launay cannot recollect the least particular of those priceless effects, those gold-rouleaus, repeating watches of his: he must even retire to Passy that very night; and two days afterwards, sees nothing for it but Boulogne and England. Thus does the miserable pickle-herring tragedy of the Diamond Necklace wind itself up, and wind Cagliostro once more to inhospitable shores.

Arrived here, and lodged tolerably in 'Sloane Street, Knightsbridge,' by the aid of a certain Mr. Swinton, whilom broken Winemerchant, now Apothecary, to whom he carries introductions, he can drive a small trade in Egyptian pills, such as one 'sells *in Paris* at thirty-shillings the dram;' in unctuously discoursing to Egyptian Lodges; in 'giving public audiences as at Strasburg,'—if so be any one will bite. At all events, he can, by the aid of amanuensis-

disciples, compose and publish his *Lettre au Peuple Anglais;* setting forth his unheard-of generosities, unheard-of injustices suffered, in a world not worthy of him, at the hands of English Lawyers, Bastille-Governors, French Counts, and others: his *Lettre aux Français,* singing to the same tune, predicting too, what many inspired Editors had already boded, that 'the Bastille would be 'destroyed,' and 'a King would come who should govern by States-'General.' But, alas, the shafts of Criticism are busy with him; so many hostile eyes look towards him: the world, in short, is getting too hot for him. Mark, nevertheless, how the brow of brass quails not; nay a touch of his old poetic Humour, even in this sad crisis, unexpectedly unfolds itself.

One De Morande, Editor of a *Courrier de l'Europe* published here at that period, has for some time made it his distinction to be the foremost of Cagliostro's enemies. Cagliostro, enduring much in silence, happens once, in some 'public audience,' to mention a practice he had witnessed in Arabia the Stony: the people there, it seems, are in the habit of fattening a few pigs annually, on provender mixed with arsenic, whereby the whole pig-carcass by and by becomes, so to speak, arsenical; the arsenical pigs are then let loose into the woods; eaten by lions, leopards and other ferocious creatures; which latter naturally all die in consequence, and so the woods are cleared of them. This adroit practice the Sieur Morande thought a proper subject for banter; and accordingly, in his Seventeenth and two following Numbers, made merry enough with it. Whereupon Count Front-of-brass, whose patience has limits, writes as Advertisement (still to be read in old files of the *Public Advertiser,* under date September 3, 1786), a French Letter, not without causticity and aristocratic disdain; challenging the witty Sieur to breakfast with him, for the 9th of November next, in the face of the world, on an actual Sucking Pig, fattened by Cagliostro, but cooked, carved and selected from by the Sieur Morande,—under bet of Five Thousand Guineas sterling that, next morning thereafter, he the Sieur Morande shall be dead, and Count Cagliostro be alive! The poor Sieur durst not cry, Done; and backed-out of the transaction, making wry faces. Thus does a kind of red coppery splendour encircle our Archquack's decline; thus with brow of brass, grim smiling, does he meet his destiny.

But suppose we should now, from these foreign scenes turn homewards, for a moment, into the native alley in Palermo! Palermo, with its dinginess, its mud or dust, the old black Balsamo House,

the very beds and chairs, all are still standing there; and Beppo has altered so strangely, has wandered so far away. Let us look; for happily we have the fairest opportunity.

In April 1787, Palermo contained a Traveller of a thousand; no other than the great Goethe from Weimar. At his Table-d'hôte he heard much of Cagliostro; at length also of a certain Palermo Lawyer, who had been engaged by the French Government to draw up an authentic genealogy and memoir of him. This Lawyer, and even the rude draft of his Memoir, he with little difficulty gets to see; inquires next whether it were not possible to see the actual Balsamo Family, whereof it appears the mother and a widowed sister still survive. For this matter, however, the Lawyer can do nothing; only refer him to his Clerk; who again starts difficulties: To get at those genealogic Documents he has been obliged to invent some story of a Government-Pension being in the wind for those poor Balsamos; and now that the whole matter is finished, and the Paper sent off to France, has nothing so much at heart as to keep out of their way:

'So said the Clerk. However, as I could not abandon my purpose, we after some study concerted that I should give myself out for an Englishman, and bring the family news of Cagliostro, who had lately got out of the Bastille, and gone to London.

'At the appointed hour, it might be three in the afternoon, we set forth. The house lay in the corner of an Alley, not far from the main-street named *Il Casaro*. We ascended a miserable staircase, and came straight into the kitchen. A woman of middle stature, broad and stout, yet not corpulent, stood busy washing the kitchen-dishes. She was decently dressed; and, on our entrance, turned-up the one end of her apron, to hide the soiled side from us. She joyfully recognised my conductor, and said: "Signor Giovanni, do you bring us good news? Have you made out anything?"

'He answered: "In our affair, nothing yet; but here is a Stranger that brings a salutation from your Brother, and can tell you how he is at present."

'The salutation I was to bring stood not in our agreement: meanwhile, one way or other, the introduction was accomplished. "You know my Brother?" inquired she.—"All Europe knows him," answered I; "and I fancied it would gratify you to hear that he is now in safety and well; as, of late, no doubt you have been anxious about him."—"Step in," said she; "I will follow you directly;" and with the Clerk I entered the room.

'It was large and high; and might, with us, have passed for a saloon; it seemed, indeed, to be almost the sole lodging of the family. A single

window lighted the large walls, which had once had colour; and on which were black pictures of saints, in gilt frames, hanging round. Two large beds, without curtains, stood at one wall; a brown press, in the form of a writing-desk, at the other. Old rush-bottomed chairs, the backs of which had once been gilt, stood by; and the tiles of the floor were in many places worn deep into hollows. For the rest, all was cleanly; and we approached the family, which sat assembled at the one window, in the other end of the apartment.

'Whilst my guide was explaining, to the old Widow Balsamo, the purpose of our visit, and by reason of her deafness had to repeat his words several times aloud, I had time to observe the chamber and the other persons in it. A girl of about sixteen, well formed, whose features had become uncertain by small-pox, stood at the window; beside her a young man, whose disagreeable look, deformed by the same disease, also struck me. In an easy-chair, right before the window, sat or rather lay a sick, much disshapen person, who appeared to labour under a sort of lethargy.

'My guide having made himself understood, we were invited to take seats. The old woman put some questions to me; which, however, I had to get interpreted before I could answer them, the Sicilian dialect not being quite at my command.

'Meanwhile I looked at the aged widow with satisfaction. She was of middle stature, but well shaped; over her regular features, which age had not deformed, lay that sort of peace usual with people that have lost their hearing; the tone of her voice was soft and agreeable.

'I answered her questions; and my answers also had again to be interpreted for her.

'The slowness of our conversation gave me leisure to measure my words. I told her that her son had been acquitted in France, and was at present in England, where he met with good reception. Her joy, which she testified at these tidings, was mixed with expressions of a heartfelt piety; and as she now spoke a little louder and slower, I could the better understand her.

'In the mean time the daughter had entered; and taken her seat beside my conductor, who repeated to her faithfully what I had been narrating. She had put-on a clean apron; had set her hair in order under the net-cap. The more I looked at her, and compared her with her mother, the more striking became the difference of the two figures. A vivacious, healthy Sensualism (*Sinnlichkeit*) beamed forth from the whole structure of the daughter: she might be a woman of about forty. With brisk blue eyes, she looked sharply round; yet in her look I could trace no suspicion. When she sat, her figure promised more height than it showed when she rose: her posture was determinate, she sat with her body leaned forwards, the hands resting on the knees. For the rest, her

physiognomy, more of the snubby than the sharp sort, reminded me of her Brother's Portrait, familiar to us in engravings. She asked me several things about my journey, my purpose to see Sicily; and was sure I would come back, and celebrate the Feast of Saint Rosalia with them.

'As the grandmother, meanwhile, had again put some questions to me, and I was busy answering her, the daughter kept speaking to my companion half-aloud, yet so that I could take occasion to ask what it was. He answered: Signora Capitummino was telling him that her Brother owed her fourteen gold Ounces; on his sudden departure from Palermo, she had redeemed several things for him that were in pawn; but never since that day had either heard from him, or got money or any other help, though it was said he had great riches, and made a princely outlay. Now would not I perhaps undertake on my return, to remind him, in a handsome way, of the debt, and procure some assistance for her; nay would I not carry a Letter with me, or at all events get it carried? I offered to do so. She asked where I lodged, whither she must send the Letter to me? I avoided naming my abode, and offered to call next day towards night, and receive the Letter myself.

'She thereupon described to me her untoward situation: how she was a widow with three children, of whom the one girl was getting educated in a convent, the other was here present, and her son just gone out to his lesson. How, beside these three children, she had her mother to maintain; and moreover out of Christian love had taken the unhappy sick person there to the house, whereby the burden was heavier: how all her industry would scarcely suffice to get necessaries for herself and hers. She knew indeed that God did not leave good works unrewarded; yet must sigh very sore under the load she had long borne.

'The young people mixed in the dialogue, and our conversation grew livelier. While speaking with the others, I could hear the good old widow ask her daughter: If I belonged, then, to their holy Religion? I remarked also that the daughter strove, in a prudent way, to avoid an answer; signifying to her mother, so far as I could take it up: That the Stranger seemed to have a kind feeling towards them; and that it was not well-bred to question any one straightway on that point.

'As they heard that I was soon to leave Palermo, they became more pressing, and importuned me to come back; especially vaunting the paradisaic days of the Rosalia Festival, the like of which was not to be seen and tasted in all the world.

'My attendant, who had long been anxious to get off, at last put an end to the interview by his gestures; and I promised to return on the morrow evening, and take the Letter. My attendant expressed his joy that all had gone off so well, and we parted mutually content.

'You may fancy the impression this poor and pious, well-dispositioned

family had made on me. My curiosity was satisfied; but their natural and worthy bearing had raised an interest in me, which reflection did but increase.

'Forthwith, however, there arose for me anxieties about the following day. It was natural that this appearance of mine, which, at the first moment, had taken them by surprise, should, after my departure, awaken many reflections. By the Genealogy I knew that several others of the family were in life: it was natural that they should call their friends together, and in the presence of all, get those things repeated which, the day before, they had heard from me with admiration. My object was attained; there remained nothing more than, in some good fashion, to end the adventure. I accordingly repaired next day, directly after dinner, alone to their house. They expressed surprise as I entered. The Letter was not ready yet, they said; and some of their relations wished to make my acquaintance, who towards night would be there.

'I answered, that having to set off tomorrow morning, and visits still to pay, and packing to transact, I had thought it better to come early than not at all.

'Meanwhile the son entered, whom yesterday I had not seen. He resembled his sister in size and figure. He brought the Letter they were to give me; he had, as is common in those parts, got it written out of doors, by one of their Notaries that sit publicly to do such things. The young man had a still, melancholy and modest aspect; inquired after his Uncle, asked about his riches and outlays, and added sorrowfully, Why had he so forgotten his kindred? "It were our greatest fortune," continued he, "should he once return hither, and take notice of us: but," continued he, "how came he to let you know that he had relatives in Palermo? It is said, he everywhere denies us, and gives himself out for a man of great birth." I answered this question, which had now arisen by the imprudence of my Guide at our first entrance, in such sort as to make it seem that the Uncle, though he might have reason for concealing his birth from the public, did yet, towards his friends and acquaintance, keep it no secret.

'The sister, who had come up during this dialogue, and by the presence of her brother, perhaps also by the absence of her yesterday's friend, had got more courage, began also to speak with much grace and liveliness. They begged me earnestly to recommend them to their Uncle, if I wrote to him; and not less earnestly, when once I should have made this journey through the Island, to come back and pass the Rosalia Festival with them.

'The mother spoke in accordance with her children. "Sir," said she, "though it is not seemly, as I have a grown daughter, to see stranger gentlemen in my house, and one has cause to guard against both danger and evil-speaking, yet shall you ever be welcome to us, when you return to this city."

'"O yes," answered the young ones, "we will lead the Gentleman all round the Festival; we will show him everything, get a place on the scaffolds, where the grand sights are seen best. What will he say to the great Chariot, and more than all, to the glorious Illumination!"

'Meanwhile the Grandmother had read the Letter and again read it. Hearing that I was about to take leave, she arose, and gave me the folded sheet. "Tell my son," began she with a noble vivacity, nay with a sort of inspiration, "Tell my son how happy the news have made me, which you brought from him! Tell him that I clasp him to my heart"—here she stretched out her arms asunder, and pressed them again together on her breast—"that I daily beseech God and our Holy Virgin for him in prayer; that I give him and his wife my blessing; and that I wish before my end to see him again with these eyes, which have shed so many tears for him."

'The peculiar grace of the Italian tongue favoured the choice and noble arrangement of these words, which moreover were accompanied with lively gestures, wherewith that nation can add such a charm to spoken words.

'I took my leave, not without emotion. They all gave me their hands; the children showed me out; and as I went down stairs, they jumped to the balcony of the kitchen-window, which projected over the street; called after me, threw me salutes, and repeated, that I must in no wise forget to come back. I saw them still on the balcony, when I turned the corner.'[11]

Poor old Felicità, and must thy pious prayers, thy motherly blessings, and so many tears shed by those old eyes, be all in vain! To thyself, in any case, they were blessed.—As for the Signora Capitummino, with her three fatherless children, shall we not hope at least, that the fourteen gold Ounces were paid, by a sure hand, and so her heavy burden, for some space, lightened a little? Alas, no, it would seem; owing to accidents, not even that![12]

Count Cagliostro, all this while, is rapidly proceeding with his Fifth Act; the red coppery splendour darkens more and more into final gloom. Some boiling muddleheads of a dupeable sort there still are in England: Popish-Riot Lord George, for instance, will walk with him to Count Barthélemy's or D'Adhémar's; and, in bad French and worse rhetoric, abuse the Queen of France: but what does it profit? Lord George must one day (after noise enough) revisit Newgate for it; and in the mean while, hard words pay no scores. Apothecary Swinton begins to get wearisome;

[11] Goethe's *Werke* (*Italiänische Reise*), xxviii. 146. [12] Ibid.

French spies look ominously in; Egyptian Pills are slack of sale; the old vulturous Attorney-host anew scents the carrion, is bestirring itself anew: Count Cagliostro, in the May of 1787, must once more leave England. But whither? Ah, whither! At Bâle, at Bienne, over Switzerland, the game is up. At Aix in Savoy, there are baths, but no gudgeons in them: at Turin, his Majesty of Sardinia meets you with an order to begone on the instant. A like fate from the Emperor Joseph at Roveredo;—before the *Liber memorialis de Caleostro dum esset Roboretti* could extend to many pages! Count Front-of-brass begins confessing himself to priests: yet 'at Trent paints a new hieroglyphic Screen,'—touching last flicker of a light that once burnt so high! He pawns diamond buckles; wanders necessitous hither and thither; repents, unrepents; knows not what to do. For Destiny has her nets round him; they are straitening, straitening; too soon he will be *ginned!*

Driven out from Trent, what shall he make of the new hieroglyphic Screen, what of himself? The wayworn Grand-Cophtess has begun to blab family secrets; she longs to be in Rome, by her mother's hearth, by her mother's grave; in any nook, where so much as the shadow of refuge waits her. To the desperate Count Front-of-brass all places are nearly alike: urged by female babble, he will go to Rome, then; why not? On a May-day, of the year 1789 (when such glorious work had just begun in France, to him all forbidden!), he enters the Eternal City; it was his doom-summons that called him thither. On the 29th of next December, the Holy Inquisition, long watchful, enough, detects him founding some feeble moneyless ghost of an Egyptian Lodge; 'picks him off,' as the military say, and locks him hard and fast in the Castle of St. Angelo:

Lasciate ogni speranza, voi che 'ntrate!

Count Cagliostro did not lose all hope: nevertheless a few words will now suffice for him. In vain, with his mouth of pinchbeck and his front of brass, does he heap chimera on chimera; demand religious Books (which are freely given him); demand clean Linen, and an interview with his Wife (which are refused him); assert now that the Egyptian Masonry is a divine system, accommodated to erring and gullible men, which the Holy Father, when he knows it, will patronise; anon that there are some four millions of Freemasons, spread over Europe, all sworn to exterminate Priest and King, wherever met with: in vain! they will not acquit him, as misunderstood Theophilanthropist; will not

emit him, in Pope's pay, as renegade Masonic Spy: 'he can't get out.' Donna Lorenza languishes, invisible to him, in a neighbouring cell; begins at length to *confess!* Whereupon he too, in torrents, will emit confessions and forestall her: these the Inquisition pocket and sift (whence this *Life of Balsamo*); but will not let him out. In fine, after some eighteen months of the weariest hounding, doubling, worrying, and standing at bay, His Holiness gives sentence: The Manuscript of Egyptian Masonry is to be burnt by hand of the common Hangman, and all that intermeddle with such Masonry are accursed; Giuseppe Balsamo, justly forfeited of life for being a Freemason, shall nevertheless in mercy be forgiven; instructed in the duties of penitence, and even kept safe thenceforth and till death,—in ward of Holy Church. Ill-starred Acharat, must it so end with thee? This was in April 1791.

He addressed (how vainly!) an appeal to the French Constituent Assembly. As was said, in Heaven, in Earth, or in Hell there was no Assembly that could well take his part. For four years more, spent one knows not how,—most probably in the furor of edacity, with insufficient cookery, and the stupor of indigestion,—the curtain lazily falls. There rotted and gave way the cordage of a tough heart. One summer morning of the year 1795, the Body of Cagliostro is still found in the prison of St. Leo; but Cagliostro's Self has escaped,—*whither* no man yet knows. The brow of brass, behold how it has got all unlacquered; these pinchbeck lips can lie no more: Cagliostro's work is ended, and now only his *account* to present. As the Scherif of Mecca said, "Nature's unfortunate child, adieu!"

Such, according to our comprehension thereof, is the rise, progress, grandeur and decadence of the Quack of Quacks. Does the reader ask, What good was in it? Why occupy his time and ours with the biography of such a miscreant? We answer, It was stated on the very threshold of this matter, in the loftiest terms, by Herr Sauerteig, that the Lives of all Eminent Persons, miscreant or creant, ought to be written. Thus has not the very Devil his *Life*, deservedly written not by Daniel Defoe only, but by quite other hands than Daniel's? For the rest, the Thing represented on these pages is no Sham, but a Reality; thou hast it, O reader, as we have it: Nature was pleased to produce even such a man, even so, not otherwise; and the Editor of this Magazine

is here mainly to record, in an adequate manner, what *she*, of her thousandfold mysterious richness and greatness, produces.

But the moral lesson? Where is the moral lesson? Foolish reader, in every Reality, nay in every genuine Shadow of a Reality (what we call Poem), there lie a hundred such, or a million such, according as thou hast the *eye* to read them! Of which hundred or million lying *here* in the present Reality, couldst not thou, for example, be advised to take this one, to thee worth all the rest: "Behold, I too have attained that immeasurable, mysterious glory "of being *alive*; to me also a Capability has been intrusted; shall I "strive to work it out, manlike, into Faithfulness, and Doing; or, "quacklike, into Eatableness, and Similitude of Doing? Or why "not rather, gigman-like, and following the 'respectable' countless "multitude,—into *both?*" The decision is of quite *infinite* moment; see thou make it aright.

But in fine, look at this matter of Cagliostro, as at all matters, with thy heart, with thy whole mind; no longer merely squint at it with the poor side-glance of thy calculative faculty. Look at it not *logically* only, but *mystically*. Thou shalt in sober truth see it (as Sauerteig asserted) to be a Pasquillant verse, of most inspired writing in its kind, in that same 'Grand Bible of Universal History;' wondrously and even indispensably connected with the Heroic portions that stand there; even as the all-showing Light is with the Darkness wherein nothing can be seen; as the hideous taloned *roots* are with the fair *boughs*, and their leaves and flowers and fruit; both of which, and not one of which, make the Tree. Think also whether thou hast known no Public Quacks, on far higher scale than this, whom a Castle of St. Angelo never could get hold of; and how, as Emperors, Chancellors (having found much fitter machinery), they could run their Quack-career; and make whole kingdoms, whole continents, into one huge Egyptian Lodge, and squeeze supplies of money or of blood from it at discretion? Also, whether thou even now knowest not Private Quacks, innumerable as the sea-sands, toiling as mere *Half*-Cagliostros; imperfect, hybrid-quacks, of whom Cagliostro is as the unattainable ideal and type-specimen? Such is the world. Understand it, despise it, love it; cheerfully hold on thy way through it, with thy eye on higher load-stars!

DEATH OF EDWARD IRVING.

DEATH OF EDWARD IRVING.[1]

[1835.]

EDWARD IRVING'S warfare has closed; if not in victory, yet in invincibility, and faithful endurance to the end. The Spirit of the Time, which could not enlist him as its soldier, must needs, in all ways, fight against him as its enemy: it has done its part, and he has done his. One of the noblest natures; a man of antique heroic nature, in questionable modern garniture, which he could not wear! Around him a distracted society, vacant, prurient; heat and darkness, and what these two may breed: mad extremes of flattery, followed by madder contumely, by indifference and neglect! These were the conflicting elements; this is the result they have made out among them. The voice of our 'son of thunder,'—with its deep tone of wisdom that belonged to all articulate-speaking ages, never inaudible amid wildest dissonances that belong to this inarticulate age, which slumbers and somnambulates, which cannot *speak*, but only screech and gibber,—has gone silent so soon. Closed are those lips. The large heart, with its large bounty, where wretchedness found solacement, and they that were wandering in darkness the light as of a home, has paused. The strong man can no more: beaten-on from without, undermined from within, he has had to sink overwearied, as at nightfall, when it was yet but the mid-season of day. Irving was forty-two years and some months old: Scotland sent him forth a Herculean man; our mad Babylon wore him and wasted him, with all her engines; and it took her twelve years. He sleeps with his fathers, in that loved birth-land: Babylon with its deafening inanity rages on; but to him henceforth innocuous, unheeeded —forever.

Reader, thou hast seen and heard the man, as who has not,—

[1] FRASER'S MAGAZINE, No. 61.

with wise or unwise wonder; thou shalt not see or hear him again. The work, be what it might, is *done;* dark curtains sink over it, enclose it ever deeper into the unchangeable Past. Think, for perhaps thou art one of a thousand, and worthy so to think, That here once more was a genuine man sent into this our *un*genuine phantasmagory of a world, which would go to ruin without such; that here once more, under thy own eyes, in this last decade, was enacted the old Tragedy, and has had its fifth-act now, of *The Messenger of Truth in the Age of Shams,*—and what relation thou thyself mayest have to that. Whether any? Beyond question, thou thyself art *here;* either a dreamer or awake; and one day shalt cease to dream.

. . . . . .

This man was appointed a Christian Priest; and strove with the whole force that was in him to *be* it. To be it: in a time of Tithe Controversy, Encyclopedism, Catholic Rent, Philanthropism, and the Revolution of Three Days! He might have been so many things; not a speaker only, but a doer; the leader of hosts of men. For his head, when the Fog-Babylon had not yet obscured it, was of strong far-searching insight; his very enthusiasm was sanguine, not atrabiliar; he was so loving, full of hope, so simple-hearted, and made all that approached him his. A giant force of activity was in the man; speculation was accident, not nature. Chivalry, adventurous field-life of the old Border, and a far nobler sort than that, ran in his blood. There was in him a courage, dauntless not pugnacious, hardly fierce, by no possibility ferocious; as of the generous war-horse, gentle in its strength, yet that laughs at the shaking of the spear.—But, above all, be what he might, to be a *reality* was indispensable for him. In his simple Scottish circle, the highest form of manhood attainable or known was that of Christian; the highest Christian was the Teacher of such. Irving's lot was cast. For the foray-spears were all rusted into earth there; Annan Castle had become a Town-hall; and Prophetic Knox had sent tidings thither: Prophetic Knox; and, alas, also Sceptic Hume; and, as the natural consequence, Diplomatic Dundas! In such mixed incongruous element had the young soul to grow.

Grow, nevertheless, he did, with that strong vitality of his; grow and ripen. What the Scottish uncelebrated Irving was, they that have only seen the London celebrated and distorted one can never know. Bodily and spiritually, perhaps there was not, in that

November 1822, when he first arrived here, a man more full of genial energetic life in all these Islands.

By a fatal chance, Fashion cast her eye on him, as on some impersonation of Novel-Cameronianism, some wild Product of Nature from the wild mountains; Fashion crowded round him, with her meteor lights and Bacchic dances; breathed her foul incense on him; intoxicating, poisoning. One may say, it was his own nobleness that forwarded such ruin; the excess of his sociability and sympathy, of his value for the suffrages and sympathies of men. Siren songs, as of a new Moral Reformation (sons of Mammon, and high sons of Belial and Beelzebub, to become sons of God, and the gumflowers of Almack's to be made living roses in a new Eden), sound in the inexperienced ear and heart. Most seductive, most delusive! Fashion went her idle way, to gaze on Egyptian Crocodiles, Iroquois Hunters, or what else there might be; forgot this man,—who unhappily could not in his turn forget. The intoxicating poison had been swallowed; no force of natural health could cast it out. Unconsciously, for most part in deep unconsciousness, there was now the impossibility to live neglected; to walk on the quiet paths, where alone it is well with us. Singularity must henceforth succeed Singularity. O foulest Circean draught, thou poison of Popular Applause! madness is in thee, and death; thy end is Bedlam and the Grave. For the last seven years, Irving, forsaken by the world, strove either to recall it, or to forsake it; shut himself up in a lesser world of ideas and persons, and lived isolated there. Neither in this was there health: for this man such isolation was not fit, such ideas, such persons.

One light still shone on him; alas, through a medium more and more turbid: the light from Heaven. His Bible was there, wherein must lie healing for all sorrows. To the Bible he more and more exclusively addressed himself. If it is the written Word of God, shall it not be the acted Word too? Is it mere sound, then; black printer's-ink on white rag-paper? A half-man could have passed on without answering; a whole man must answer. Hence Prophecies of Millenniums, Gifts of Tongues,—whereat Orthodoxy prims herself into decent wonder, and waves her, Avaunt! Irving clave to his Belief, as to his soul's soul; followed it whithersoever, through earth or air, it might lead him; toiling as never man toiled to spread it, to gain the world's ear for it,—in vain. Ever wilder waxed the confusion without and within. The misguided noble-minded had now nothing left to do but die. He died the death

of the true and brave. His last words, they say, were: "In life and in death I am the Lord's."—Amen! Amen!

One who knew him well, and may with good cause love him, has said: "But for Irving, I had never known what the communion of man with man means. His was the freest, brotherliest, bravest human soul mine ever came in contact with: I call him, on the whole, the best man I have ever, after trial enough, found in this world, or now hope to find.

"The first time I saw Irving was six-and-twenty years ago, in his native town, Annan. He was fresh from Edinburgh, with College prizes, high character and promise; he had come to see our Schoolmaster, who had also been his. We heard of famed Professors, of high matters classical, mathematical, a whole Wonderland of Knowledge: nothing but joy, health, hopefulness without end, looked out from the blooming young man. The last time I saw him was three months ago, in London. Friendliness still beamed in his eyes, but now from amid unquiet fire; his face was flaccid, wasted, unsound; hoary as with extreme age: he was trembling over the brink of the grave.—Adieu, thou first Friend; adieu, while this confused Twilight of Existence lasts! Might we meet where Twilight has become Day!"

APPENDIX.

No. 1.

THE TALE.[1]

BY GOETHE.

[1832.]

THAT Goethe, many years ago, wrote a piece named *Das Mährchen* (The Tale); which the admiring critics of Germany contrived to criticise by a stroke of the pen; declaring that it was indeed *The* Tale, and worthy to be called the Tale of Tales (*das Mährchen aller Mährchen*),—may appear certain to most English readers, for they have repeatedly seen as much in print. To some English readers it may appear certain, furthermore, that they personally know this Tale of Tales; and can even pronounce it to deserve no such epithet, and the admiring critics of Germany to be little other than blockheads.

English readers! the first certainty is altogether indubitable; the second certainty is not worth a rush.

The same *Mährchen aller Mährchen* you may see with your own eyes, at this hour, in the Fifteenth Volume of *Goethes Werke;* and seeing is believing. On the other hand, that English 'Tale of Tales,' put forth some years ago as the Translation thereof, by an individual connected with the Periodical Press of London (his Periodical vehicle, if we remember, broke down soon after, and was rebuilt, and still runs, under the name of *Court Journal*),—was a Translation, miserable enough, of a quite different thing; a thing, not a *Mährchen* (Fabulous Tale) at all, but an *Erzählung* or common fictitious Narrative; having no manner of relation to the real piece (beyond standing in the same Volume); not so much as Milton's *Tetrachordon* of Divorce has to his *Allegro* and *Penseroso!* In this way do individuals connected with the Periodical Press of London play their part, and commodiously befool thee, O Public of English readers, and can serve thee with a mass of roasted grass, and name it stewed venison; and will continue to do so, till thou—open thy eyes, and from a blind monster become a seeing one.

This mistake we did not publicly note at the time of its occurrence; for two good reasons: first, that while mistakes are increasing, like Population, at the rate of Twelve Hundred a-day, the benefit of seizing *one*, and throttling it, would be perfectly inconsiderable: second, that we were not then in existence. The highly composite astonishing Entity, which here as 'O. Y.' addresses

[1] FRASER'S MAGAZINE, No. 33.

mankind for a season, still slumbered (his elements scattered over Infinitude, and working under other shapes) in the womb of Nothing! Meditate on us a little, O reader: if thou wilt consider who and what we are; what Powers, of Cash, Esurience, Intelligence, Stupidity and Mystery created us, and what work we do and will do, there shall be no end to thy amazement.

This mistake, however, we do now note; induced thereto by occasion. By the fact, namely, that a genuine English Translation of that *Mährchen* has been handed-in to us for judgment; and now (such judgment having proved merciful) comes out from us in the way of publication. Of the Translation we cannot say much; by the colour of the paper, it may be some seven years old, and have lain perhaps in smoky repositories: it is not a good Translation; yet also not wholly bad; faithful to the original (as we can vouch, after strict trial); conveys the real meaning, though with an effort: here and there our pen has striven to help it, but could not do much. The poor Translator, who signs himself 'D. T.,' and affects to carry matters with a high hand, though, as we have ground to surmise, he is probably in straits for the necessaries of life,—has, at a more recent date, appended numerous Notes; wherein he will convince himself that more meaning lies in his *Mährchen* 'than in all the Literature of our century:' some of these we have retained, now and then with an explanatory or exculpatory word of our own; the most we have cut away, as superfluous and even absurd. Superfluous and even absurd, we say: D. T. can take this of us as he likes; we know him, and what is in him, and what is not in him; believe that he will prove reasonable; can do either way. At all events, let one of the notablest Performances produced for the last thousand years be now, through his organs (since no other, in this elapsed half-century, have offered themselves), set before an undiscerning public.

We too will premise our conviction that this *Mährchen* presents a phantasmagoric Adumbration, pregnant with deepest significance; though nowise that D. T. has so accurately evolved the same. Listen notwithstanding to a remark or two, extracted from his immeasurable Proem:

'Dull men of this country,' says he, 'who pretend to admire Goethe, smiled 'on me when I first asked the meaning of this Tale. "Meaning!" answered 'they: "it is a wild arabesque, without meaning or purpose at all, except to 'dash together, copiously enough, confused hues of Imagination, and see what 'will come of them." Such is still the persuasion of several heads; which 'nevertheless would perhaps grudge to be considered wigblocks.'—Not impossible: the first Sin in our Universe was Lucifer's, that of Self-conceit. But hear again; what is more to the point:

'The difficulties of interpretation are exceedingly enhanced by one circum-'stance, not unusual in other such writings of Goethe's; namely, that this is 'no Allegory; which, as in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, you have only once for all 'to find the key of, and so go on unlocking: it is a Phantasmagory, rather; 'wherein things the most heterogeneous are, with homogeneity of figure, em-'blemed forth; which would require not one key to unlock it, but, at different 'stages of the business, a dozen successive keys. Here you have Epochs of Time 'shadowed forth, there Qualities of the Human Soul; now it is Institutions, 'Historical Events, now Doctrines, Philosophic Truths: thus are all manner 'of "entities and quiddities and ghosts of defunct bodies" set flying; you 'have the whole Four Elements chaotico-creatively jumbled together, and

'spirits enough embodying themselves, and roguishly peering through, in the 'confused wild-working mass! * * *

'So much, however, I will stake my whole money-capital and literary 'character upon: that here is a wonderful EMBLEM OF UNIVERSAL HISTORY set 'forth; more especially a wonderful Emblem of this our wonderful and woful '"Age of Transition;" what men have been and done, what they are to be 'and do, is, in this Tale of Tales, poetico-prophetically typified, in such a style 'of grandeur and celestial brilliancy and life, as the Western Imagination has 'not elsewhere reached; as only the Oriental Imagination, and in the primeval 'ages, was wont to attempt.'—Here surely is good wine, with a big bush! Study the Tale of Tales, O reader: even in the bald version of D. T., there will be meaning found. He continues in this triumphant style:

'Can any mortal head (not a wigblock) doubt that the Giant of this Poem 'means SUPERSTITION? That the Ferryman has something to do with the 'PRIESTHOOD; his Hut with the CHURCH?

'Again, might it not be presumed that the River were TIME; and that it 'flowed (as Time does) between two worlds? Call the world, or country on 'this side, where the fair Lily dwells, the world of SUPERNATURALISM; the 'country on that side, NATURALISM, the working week-day world where we 'all dwell and toil: whosoever or whatsoever introduces itself, and appears, in 'the firm-earth of human business, or as we well say, *comes into* Existence, 'must proceed *from* Lily's supernatural country; whatsoever of a material 'sort deceases and disappears might be expected to go *thither*. Let the reader 'consider this, and note what comes of it.

'To get a free solid communication established over this same wondrous River 'of Time, so that the Natural and Supernatural may stand in friendliest 'neighbourhood and union, forms the grand action of this Phantasmagoric 'Poem: is not such also, let me ask thee, the grand action and summary of 'Universal History; the one problem of Human Culture; the thing which 'Mankind (once the three daily meals of victual were moderately secured) has 'ever striven after, and must ever strive after?—Alas! we observe very soon, 'matters stand on a most distressful footing, in this of Natural and Super-'natural: there are three conveyances across, and all bad, all incidental, 'temporary, uncertain: the worst of the three, one would think, and the worst 'conceivable, were the Giant's Shadow, at sunrise and sunset; the best that 'Snake-bridge at noon, yet still only a bad-best. Consider again our trust-'less, rotten, revolutionary "age of transition," and see whether this too does 'not fit it!

'If you ask next, Who these other strange characters are, the Snake, the 'Will-o'-wisps, the Man with the Lamp? I will answer, in general and afar 'off, that *Light* must signify human Insight, Cultivation, in one sort or other. 'As for the Snake, I know not well what name to call it by; nay perhaps, 'in our scanty vocabularies, there is no *name* for it, though that does not 'hinder its being a thing, genuine enough. Meditation; Intellectual Re-'search; Understanding; in the most general acceptation, Thought: all these 'come near designating it; none actually designates it. Were I bound, 'under legal penalties, to give the creature a name, I should say, THOUGHT 'rather than another.

'But what if our Snake, and so much else that works here beside it, were

'neither a *quality*, nor a *reality*, nor a *state*, nor an *action*, in any kind; none 'of these things purely and alone, but something intermediate and partaking 'of them all! In which case, to *name* it, in vulgar speech, were a still more 'frantic attempt: it is unnameable in speech; and remains only the allegorical 'Figure known in this Tale by the name of Snake, and more or less *resembling* 'and shadowing-forth somewhat that speech has named, or might name. It is 'this heterogeneity of nature, pitching your solidest Predicables heels-over-'head, throwing you half-a-dozen Categories into the melting-pot at once,— 'that so unspeakably bewilders a Commentator, and for moments is nigh 'reducing him to *delirium saltans*.

'The Will-o'-wisps, that laugh and jig, and compliment the ladies, and eat 'gold and shake it from them, I for my own share take the liberty of viewing 'as some shadow of ELEGANT CULTURE, or modern Fine Literature; which by 'and by became so sceptical-destructive; and did, as French Philosophy, eat 'Gold (or Wisdom) enough, and shake it out again. In which sense, their 'coming (into Existence) by the old Ferryman's (by the Priesthood's) assistance, 'and almost oversetting his boat, and then laughing at him, and trying to 'skip-off from him, yet being obliged to stop till they had satisfied him: all 'this, to the discerning eye, has its significance.

'As to the Man with the Lamp, in him and his gold-*giving*, jewel-forming 'and otherwise so miraculous Light, which "casts no shadow," and "cannot 'illuminate what is wholly otherwise in darkness,"—I see what you might 'name the celestial REASON of Man (Reason as contrasted with Understanding, 'and superordinated to it), the purest essence of his seeing Faculty; which 'manifests itself as the Spirit of Poetry, of Prophecy, or whatever else of 'highest in the intellectual sort man's mind can do. We behold this respect-'able, venerable Lamp-bearer everywhere present in time of need; directing, 'accomplishing, working, wonder-working, finally victorious;—as, in strict 'reality, it is ever (if we will study it) the Poetic Vision that lies at the bottom 'of all other Knowledge or Action; and is the source and creative fountain of 'whatsoever mortals *ken* or *can*, and mystically and miraculously guides them 'forward whither they are to go. Be the Man with the Lamp, then, named 'REASON! mankind's noblest inspired Insight and Light; whereof all the 'other lights are but effluences, and more or less discoloured emanations.

'His Wife, poor old woman, we shall call PRACTICAL ENDEAVOUR; which 'as married to Reason, to spiritual Vision and Belief, first makes-up man's 'being here below. Unhappily the ancient couple, we find, are but in a 'decayed condition: the better emblems are they of Reason and Endeavour in 'this our "transitionary age"! The Man presents himself in the garb of a 'peasant, the Woman has grown over garrulous, querulous; both live never-'theless in their "ancient cottage," better or worse, the roof-tree of which still 'holds together over them. And then those mischievous Will-o'-wisps, who 'pay the old lady such court, and eat all the old gold (all that was wise and 'beautiful and desirable) off her walls; and show the old stones, quite ugly 'and bare, as they had not been for ages! Besides they have killed poor Mops, 'the plaything, and joy and fondling of the house;—as has not that same Ele-'gant Culture, or French Philosophy done, wheresoever it has arrived? Mark, 'notwithstanding, how the Man with the Lamp puts it all right again, recon-'ciles everything, and makes the finest business out of what seemed the worst.

'With regard to the Four Kings, and the Temple which lies fashioned 'underground, please to consider all this as the Future lying prepared and 'certain under the Present: you observe, not only inspired Reason (or the 'Man with the Lamp), but scientific Thought (or the Snake), can discern it 'lying there: nevertheless much work must be done, innumerable difficulties 'fronted and conquered, before it can rise out of the depths (of the Future), 'and realise itself as the actual worshipping-place of man, and "the most 'frequented Temple in the whole Earth."

'As for the fair Lily and her ambulatory necessitous Prince, these are 'objects that I shall admit myself incapable of naming: yet nowise admit 'myself incapable of attaching meaning to. Consider them as the two dis-'jointed Halves of this singular Dualistic Being of ours; a Being, I must say, 'the most utterly Dualistic; fashioned, from the very heart of it, out of 'Positive and Negative (what we happily call Light and Darkness, Necessity 'and Freewill, Good and Evil, and the like); everywhere out of *two* mortally 'opposed things, which yet must be united in vital love, if there is to be any '*Life*;—a Being, I repeat, Dualistic beyond expressing; which will split in 'two, strike it in *any* direction, on *any* of its six sides; and does of itself split 'in two (into Contradiction), every hour of the day,—were not *Life* perpetually 'there, perpetually knitting it together again! But as to that cutting-up, and 'parcelling, and labelling of the indivisible Human Soul into what are called '"Faculties," it is a thing I have from of old eschewed, and even hated. A 'thing which you *must* sometimes do (or you cannot *speak*); yet which is 'never done without Error hovering near you; for most part, without her 'pouncing on you, and quite blindfolding you.

'Let not us, therefore, in looking at Lily and her Prince be tempted to that 'practice: why should we try to *name* them at all? Enough, if we do feel 'that man's whole Being is riven asunder every way (in this "transitionary 'age"), and yawning in hostile, irreconcilable contradiction with itself: what 'good were it to know farther in what *direction* the rift (as our Poet here 'pleased to represent it) had taken effect? Fancy, however, that these two 'HALVES of Man's Soul and Being are separated, in pain and enchanted ob-'struction, from one another. The better, fairer Half sits in the Supernatural 'country, deadening and killing; alas, not permitted to come across into the 'Natural visible country, and there make all blessed and alive! The rugged 'stronger Half, in such separation, is quite lamed and paralytic; wretched, 'forlorn, in a state of death-life, must he wander to and fro over the River of 'Time; all that is dear and essential to him, imprisoned there; which if he 'look at, he grows still weaker, which if he touch, he dies. Poor Prince! 'And let the judicious reader, who has read the Era he lives in, or even 'spelt the alphabet thereof, say whether, with the paralytic-lamed Activity 'of man (hampered and hamstrung in a "transitionary age" of Scepticism, 'Methodism; atheistic Sarcasm, hysteric Orgasm; brazen-faced Delusion, 'Puffery, Hypocrisy, Stupidity, and the whole Bill and nothing but the 'Bill), it is not even so? Must not poor man's Activity (like this poor Prince) 'wander from Natural to Supernatural, and back again, disconsolate enough; 'unable to *do* anything, except merely wring its hands, and, whimpering and 'blubbering, lamentably inquire: *What* shall I do?

'But Courage! Courage! The Temple is built (though underground);

'the Bridge shall arch itself, the divided Two shall clasp each other as flames 'do, rushing into one; and all that ends well shall be well! Mark only how, 'in this inimitable Poem, worthy of an Olympic crown, or prize of the Literary 'Society, it is represented as proceeding!'

So far D. T.; a commentator who at least does not want confidence in himself: whom we shall only caution not to be too confident; to remember always that, as he once says, 'Phantasmagory is not Allegory;' that much exists, under our very noses, which has no 'name,' and can get none; that the 'River of Time' and so forth may be one thing, or more than one, or none; that, in short, there is risk of the too valiant D. T.'s bamboozling himself in this matter; being led from puddle to pool; and so left standing at last, like a foolish mystified nose-of-wax, wondering where the devil he is.

To the simpler sort of readers we shall also extend an advice; or be it rather, proffer a petition. It is to fancy themselves, for the time being, delivered altogether from D. T.'s company; and to read this *Mährchen*, as if it were there only for its own sake, and those tag-rag Notes of his were so much blank paper. Let the simpler sort of readers say now how they like it! If unhappily, on looking back, some spasm of 'the malady of thought' begin afflicting them, let such Notes be then enquired of, but not till then, and then also with distrust. Pin thy faith to no man's sleeve; hast thou not two eyes of thy own?

The Commentator himself cannot, it is to be hoped, imagine that he has exhausted the matter. To decipher and represent the *genesis* of this extraordinary Production, and what was the Author's state of mind in producing it; to *see*, with dim common eyes, what the great Goethe, with inspired poetic eyes, then saw; and paint to oneself the thick-coming shapes and many-coloured splendours of his 'Prospero's Grotto,' at that hour: this were what we could call complete criticism and commentary; what D. T. is far from having done, and ought to fall on his face, and confess that he can never do.

We shall conclude with remarking two things. First, that D. T. does not appear to have set eye on any of those German Commentaries on this Tale of Tales; or even to have heard, credently, that such exist: an omission, in a professed Translator, which he himself may answer for. Secondly, that with all his boundless preluding, he has forgotten to insert the Author's own prelude; the passage, namely, by which this *Mährchen* is specially ushered in, and the key-note of it struck by the Composer himself, and the tone of the whole prescribed! This latter altogether glaring omission we now charitably supply; and then let D. T., and his illustrious Original, and the Readers of this Magazine take it among them. Turn to the latter part of the *Deutschen Ausgewanderten* (page 208, Volume xv. of the last Edition of *Goethes Werke*); it is written there, as we render it:

'"The Imagination," said Karl, "is a fine faculty; yet I like not when she 'works on what has actually happened: the airy forms she creates are welcome 'as things of their own kind; but uniting with Truth she produces oftenest 'nothing but monsters; and seems to me, in such cases, to fly into direct 'variance with Reason and Common Sense. She ought, you might say, to 'hang upon no object, to force no object on us; she must, if she is to produce 'Works of Art, play like a sort of music upon us; move us within ourselves,

'and this in such a way that we forget there is anything without us producing 'the movement."

'"Proceed no farther," said the old man, "with your conditionings! To 'enjoy a product of Imagination, this also is a condition, that we enjoy it 'unconditionally; for Imagination herself cannot condition and bargain; she 'must wait what shall be given her. She forms no plans, prescribes for her-'self no path; but is borne and guided by her own pinions; and hovering 'hither and thither, marks out the strangest courses; which in their direction 'are ever altering. Let me but, on my evening walk, call up again to life 'within me, some wondrous figures I was wont to play with in earlier years. 'This night I promise you a Tale, which shall remind you of Nothing and 'of All."'

And now for it. O. Y.

THE TALE ('DAS MAHRCHEN'), BY GOETHE.

In his little Hut, by the great River, which a heavy rain had swoln to overflowing, lay the ancient Ferryman, asleep, wearied by the toil of the day. In the middle of the night,[2] loud voices awoke him; he heard that it was travellers wishing to be carried over.

Stepping out, he saw two large Will-o'-wisps, hovering to and fro on his boat, which lay moored: they said, they were in violent haste, and should have been already on the other side. The old Ferryman made no loitering; pushed off, and steered with his usual skill obliquely through the stream; while the two strangers whiffled and hissed together, in an unknown very rapid tongue, and every now and then broke out in loud laughter, hopping about, at one time on the gunwale and the seats, at another on the bottom of the boat.

"The boat is heeling!" cried the old man; "if you don't be quiet, it will overset; be seated, gentlemen of the wisp!"

At this advice they burst into a fit of laughter, mocked the old man, and were more unquiet than ever. He bore their mischief with patience, and soon reached the farther shore.

"Here is for your labour!" cried the travellers; and as they shook themselves, a heap of glittering gold-pieces jingled down into the wet boat. "For Heaven's sake, what are you about?" cried the old man; "you will ruin me forever! Had a single piece of gold got into the water, the stream, which cannot suffer gold, would have risen in horrid waves, and swallowed both my skiff and me; and who knows how it might have fared with you in that case? here, take back your gold."

[2] In the middle of the night, truly! In the middle of the Dark Ages, when what with Mahomedan Conquests, what with Christian Crusadings, Destructions of Constantinople, Discoveries of America, the TIME-River was indeed swoln to overflowing; and the *Ignes Fatui* (of Elegant Culture, of Literature) must needs feel in haste to get over into Existence, being much wanted; and apply to the Priesthood (respectable old Ferryman, roused out of sleep thereby!), who willingly introduced them, mischievous ungrateful imps as they were.—D. T.

"We can take nothing back, which we have once shaken from us," said the Lights.

"Then you give me the trouble," said the old man, stooping down, and gathering the pieces into his cap, "of raking them together, and carrying them ashore and burying them."

The Lights had leaped from the boat, but the old man cried: "Stay; where is my fare?"

"If you take no gold, you may work for nothing," cried the Will-o'-wisps. —"You must know that I am only to be paid with fruits of the earth."— "Fruits of the earth? we despise them, and have never tasted them."—"And yet I cannot let you go, till you have promised that you will deliver me three Cabbages, three Artichokes, and three large Onions."

The Lights were making-off with jests; but they felt themselves, in some inexplicable manner, fastened to the ground: it was the unpleasantest feeling they had ever had. They engaged to pay him his demand as soon as possible: he let them go, and pushed away. He was gone a good distance, when they called to him: "Old man! Holla, old man! the main point is forgotten!"[3] He was off, however, and did not hear them. He had fallen quietly down that side of the River, where, in a rocky spot, which the water never reached, he meant to bury the pernicious gold. Here, between two high crags, he found a monstrous chasm; shook the metal into it, and steered back to his cottage.

Now in this chasm lay the fair green Snake, who was roused from her sleep by the gold coming chinking down.[4] No sooner did she fix her eye on the glittering coins than she ate them all up, with the greatest relish, on the spot; and carefully picked out such pieces as were scattered in the chinks of the rock.

Scarcely had she swallowed them, when, with extreme delight, she began to feel the metal melting in her inwards, and spreading all over her body; and soon, to her lively joy, she observed that she was grown transparent and luminous. Long ago she had been told that this was possible; but now being doubtful whether such a light could last, her curiosity and the desire to be secure against the future, drove her from her cell, that she might see who it was that had shaken-in this precious metal. She found no one. The more delightful was it to admire her own appearance, and her graceful brightness, as she crawled along through roots and bushes, and spread out her light among the grass. Every leaf seemed of emerald, every flower was dyed with new glory. It was in vain that she crossed the solitary thickets; but her hopes rose high, when, on reaching the open country, she perceived from afar, a brilliancy resembling her own. "Shall I find my like at last, then?" cried she, and hastened to the spot. The toil of crawling through bog and reeds gave her little thought; for though she liked best to live in dry grassy spots of the mountains, among the clefts of rocks, and for most part fed on spicy herbs, and slaked her thirst with mild dew and fresh spring-water, yet for the sake of this dear gold, and in the hope of this glorious light, she would have undertaken anything you could propose to her.

[3] What could this be? To ask whither their next road lay? It was useless to ask there: the respectable old Priesthood 'did not hear them.'—D. T.

[4] THOUGHT, Understanding, roused from her long sleep by the first produce of modern Belles Lettres; which she eagerly devours.—D. T.

At last, with much fatigue, she reached a wet rushy spot in the swamp, where our two Will-o'-wisps were frisking to and fro. She shoved herself along to them; saluted them, was happy to meet such pleasant gentlemen related to her family. The Lights glided towards her, skipped up over her, and laughed in their fashion. "Lady Cousin," said they, "you are of the horizontal line, yet what of that? It is true we are related only by the look; for, observe you," here both the Flames, compressing their whole breadth, made themselves as high and peaked as possible, "how prettily this taper length beseems us gentlemen of the vertical line! Take it not amiss of us, good Lady; what family can boast of such a thing? Since there ever was a Jack-o'-lantern in the world, no one of them has either sat or lain."

The Snake felt exceedingly uncomfortable in the company of these relations; for, let her hold her head as high as possible, she found that she must bend it to the earth again, would she stir from the spot;[5] and if in the dark thicket she had been extremely satisfied with her appearance, her splendour in the presence of these cousins seemed to lessen every moment, nay she was afraid that at last it would go out entirely.

In this embarrassment she hastily asked: If the gentlemen could not inform her, whence the glittering gold came, that had fallen a short while ago into the cleft of the rock; her own opinion was, that it had been a golden shower, and had trickled down direct from the sky. The Will-o'-wisps laughed, and shook themselves, and a multitude of gold-pieces came clinking down about them. The Snake pushed nimbly forwards to eat the coin. "Much good may it do you, Mistress," said the dapper gentlemen: "we can help you to a little more." They shook themselves again several times with great quickness, so that the Snake could scarcely gulp the precious victuals fast enough. Her splendour visibly began increasing; she was really shining beautifully, while the Lights had in the mean time grown rather lean and short of stature, without however in the smallest losing their good-humour.

"I am obliged to you forever," said the Snake, having got her wind again after the repast; "ask of me what you will; all that I can I will do."

"Very good!" cried the Lights. "Then tell us where the fair Lily dwells? Lead us to the fair Lily's palace and garden; and do not lose a moment, we are dying of impatience to fall down at her feet."

"This service," said the Snake with a deep sigh, "I cannot now do for you. The fair Lily dwells, alas, on the other side of the water."—"Other side of the water? And we have come across it, this stormy night! How cruel is the River to divide us! Would it not be possible to call the old man back?"

"It would be useless," said the Snake; "for if you found him ready on the bank, he would not take you in; he can carry any one to this side, none to yonder."

"Here is a pretty kettle of fish!" cried the Lights: "are there no other means of getting through the water?"—"There are other means, but not at this moment. I myself could take you over, gentlemen, but not till noon."—"That is an hour we do not like to travel in."—"Then you may go across in

[5] True enough: Thought cannot fly and dance, as your wildfire of Belles Lettres may; she proceeds in the systole-diastole, up-and-down method; and must ever 'bend her head to the earth again' (in the way of Baconian Experiment), or she will not stir from the spot.—D. T.

the evening, on the great Giant's shadow."—"How is that?"—"The great Giant lives not far from this; with his body he has no power; his hands cannot lift a straw, his shoulders could not bear a faggot of twigs; but with his shadow he has power over much, nay all.[6] At sunrise and sunset therefore he is strongest; so at evening you merely put yourself upon the back of his shadow, the Giant walks softly to the bank, and the shadow carries you across the water. But if you please, about the hour of noon, to be in waiting at that corner of the wood where the bushes overhang the bank, I myself will take you over and present you to the fair Lily: or on the other hand, if you dislike the noontide, you have just to go at nightfall to that bend of the rocks, and pay a visit to the Giant; he will certainly receive you like a gentleman."

With a slight bow, the Flames went off; and the Snake at bottom was not discontented to get rid of them; partly that she might enjoy the brightness of her own light, partly satisfy a curiosity with which, for a long time, she had been agitated in a singular way.

In the chasm, where she often crawled hither and thither, she had made a strange discovery. For although in creeping up and down this abyss, she had never had a ray of light, she could well enough discriminate the objects in it, by her sense of touch. Generally she met with nothing but irregular productions of Nature; at one time she would wind between the teeth of large crystals, at another she would feel the barbs and hairs of native silver, and now and then carry out with her to the light some straggling jewels.[7] But, to her no small wonder, in a rock which was closed on every side, she had come on certain objects which betrayed the shaping hand of man. Smooth walls on which she could not climb, sharp regular corners, well-formed pillars; and what seemed strangest of all, human figures which she had entwined more than once, and which appeared to her to be of brass, or of the finest polished marble. All these experiences she now wished to combine by the sense of sight, thereby to confirm what as yet she only guessed. She believed she could illuminate the whole of that subterranean vault by her own light; and hoped to get acquainted with these curious things at once. She hastened back; and soon found, by the usual way, the cleft by which she used to penetrate the Sanctuary.

On reaching the place, she gazed around with eager curiosity; and though her shining could not enlighten every object in the rotunda, yet those nearest her were plain enough. With astonishment and reverence she looked up into a glancing niche, where the image of an august King stood formed of pure Gold. In size the figure was beyond the stature of man, but by its shape it seemed the likeness of a little rather than a tall person. His handsome body was encircled with an unadorned mantle; and a garland of oak bound his hair together.

No sooner had the Snake beheld this reverend figure, than the King began to speak, and asked: "Whence comest thou?"—"From the chasms where the

[6] Is not SUPERSTITION strongest when the sun is low? with body, powerless; with shadow, omnipotent?—D. T.

[7] Primitive employments, and attainments, of Thought, in this dark den whither it is sent to dwell. For many long ages, it discerns 'nothing but irregular productions of Nature;' having indeed to pick material bed and board out of Nature and her irregular productions.—D. T.

gold dwells," said the Snake.—"What is grander than gold?" inquired the King.—"Light," replied the Snake.—"What is more refreshing than light?" said he.—"Speech," answered she.

During this conversation, she had squinted to a side, and in the nearest niche perceived another glorious image. It was a Silver King in a sitting posture; his shape was long and rather languid; he was covered with a decorated robe; crown, girdle and sceptre were adorned with precious stones: the cheerfulness of pride was in his countenance; he seemed about to speak, when a vein which ran dimly-coloured over the marble wall, on a sudden became bright, and diffused a cheerful light throughout the whole Temple. By this brilliancy the Snake perceived a third King, made of Brass, and sitting mighty in shape, leaning on his club, adorned with a laurel garland, and more like a rock than a man. She was looking for the fourth, which was standing at the greatest distance from her; but the wall opened, while the glittering vein started and split, as lightning does, and disappeared.

A Man of middle stature, entering through the cleft, attracted the attention of the Snake. He was dressed like a peasant, and carried in his hand a little Lamp, on whose still flame you liked to look, and which in a strange manner, without casting any shadow, enlightened the whole dome.[8]

"Why comest thou, since we have light?" said the golden King.—"You know that I may not enlighten what is dark."[9]—"Will my Kingdom end?" said the silver King.—"Late or never," said the old Man.

With a stronger voice the brazen King began to ask: "When shall I arise?"—"Soon," replied the Man.—"With whom shall I combine?" said the King.—"With thy elder brothers," said the Man.—"What will the youngest do?" inquired the King.—"He will sit down," replied the Man.

"I am not tired," cried the fourth King, with a rough faltering voice.[10]

While this speech was going on, the Snake had glided softly round the Temple, viewing everything; she was now looking at the fourth King close by him. He stood leaning on a pillar; his considerable form was heavy rather than beautiful. But what metal it was made of could not be determined. Closely inspected, it seemed a mixture of the three metals which its brothers had been formed of. But in the founding, these materials did not seem to have combined together fully; gold and silver veins ran irregularly through a brazen mass, and gave the figure an unpleasant aspect.

Meanwhile the gold King was asking of the Man, "How many secrets knowest thou?"—"Three," replied the Man.—"Which is the most important?" said the silver King.—"The open one," replied the other.[11]—"Wilt thou open it to us also?" said the brass King.—"When I know the fourth," replied the Man.—"What care I?" grumbled the composite King, in an undertone.

[8] Poetic Light, celestial Reason!—D. T.

Let the reader, in one word, attend well to these four Kings: much annotation from D. T. is here necessarily swept out.—O. Y.

[9] What is wholly dark. Understanding precedes Reason: modern Science is come; modern Poesy is still but coming,—in Goethe (and whom else?).—D. T.

[10] Consider these Kings as Eras of the World's History; no, not as Eras, but as Principles which jointly or severally rule Eras. Alas, poor we, in this chaotic, soft-soldered 'transitionary age,' are so unfortunate as to live under the Fourth King.—D. T.

[11] Reader, hast thou any glimpse of the 'open secret'? I fear, not.—D. T. Writer, art thou a goose? I fear, yes.—O. Y.

"I know the fourth," said the Snake; approached the old Man, and hissed somewhat in his ear. "The time is at hand!" cried the old Man, with a strong voice. The temple reëchoed, the metal statues sounded; and that instant the old Man sank away to the westward, and the Snake to the eastward; and both of them passed through the clefts of the rock, with the greatest speed.

All the passages, through which the old Man travelled, filled themselves, immediately behind him, with gold; for his Lamp had the strange property of changing stone into gold, wood into silver, dead animals into precious stones, and of annihilating all metals. But to display this power, it must shine alone. If another light were beside it, the Lamp only cast from it a pure clear brightness, and all living things were refreshed by it.[12]

The old Man entered his cottage, which was built on the slope of the hill. He found his Wife in extreme distress. She was sitting at the fire weeping, and refusing to be consoled. "How unhappy am I!" cried she: "Did not I entreat thee not to go away to-night?"—"What is the matter, then?" inquired the husband, quite composed.

"Scarcely wert thou gone," said she, sobbing, "when there came two noisy Travellers to the door: unthinkingly I let them in; they seemed to be a couple of genteel, very honourable people; they were dressed in flames, you would have taken them for Will-o'-wisps. But no sooner were they in the house, than they began, like impudent varlets, to compliment me,[13] and grew so forward that I feel ashamed to think of it."

"No doubt," said the husband with a smile, "the gentlemen were jesting: considering thy age, they might have held by general politeness."

"Age! what age?" cried the Wife: "wilt thou always be talking of my age? How old am I, then?—General politeness! But I know what I know. Look round there what a face the walls have; look at the old stones, which I have not seen these hundred years; every film of gold have they licked away, thou couldst not think how fast; and still they kept assuring me that it tasted far beyond common gold. Once they had swept the walls, the fellows seemed to be in high spirits, and truly in that little while they had grown much broader and brighter. They now began to be impertinent again, they patted me, and called me their queen, they shook themselves, and a shower of gold-pieces sprang from them; see how they are shining there under the bench! But ah, what misery! Poor Mops ate a coin or two; and look, he is lying in the chimney, dead. Poor Pug! O well-a-day! I did not see it till they were gone; else I had never promised to pay the Ferryman the debt they owe him."—"What do they owe him?" said the Man.—"Three Cabbages," replied the Wife, "three Artichokes and three Onions: I engaged to go when it was day, and take them to the River."

"Thou mayest do them that civility," said the old Man; "they may chance to be of use to us again."

[12] In Illuminated Ages, the Age of Miracles is said to cease; but it is only we that cease to see it, for we are still 'refreshed by it.'—D. T.

[13] Poor old Practical Endeavour! Listen to many an *encyclopedic* Diderot, humanised *Philosophe*, didactic singer, march-of-intellect man, and other 'impudent varlets' (who would never put their own finger to the work); and hear what 'compliments' they uttered.—D. T.

'Whether they will be of use to us I know not; but they promised and vowed that they would."

Meantime the fire on the hearth had burnt low; the old Man covered-up the embers with a heap of ashes, and put the glittering gold-pieces aside; so that his little Lamp now gleamed alone, in the fairest brightness. The walls again coated themselves with gold, and Mops changed into the prettiest onyx that could be imagined. The alternation of the brown and black in this precious stone made it the most curious piece of workmanship.

"Take thy basket," said the Man, "and put the onyx into it; then take the three Cabbages, the three Artichokes and the three Onions; place them round little Mops, and carry them to the River. At noon the Snake will take thee over; visit the fair Lily, give her the onyx, she will make it alive by her touch, as by her touch she kills whatever is alive already. She will have a true companion in the little dog. Tell her, Not to mourn; her deliverance is near; the greatest misfortune she may look upon as the greatest happiness; for the time is at hand."

The old Woman filled her basket, and set out as soon as it was day. The rising sun shone clear from the other side of the River, which was glittering in the distance: the old Woman walked with slow steps, for the basket pressed upon her head, and it was not the onyx that so burdened her. Whatever lifeless thing she might be carrying, she did not feel the weight of it; on the other hand, in those cases the basket rose aloft, and hovered along above her head. But to carry any fresh herbage, or any little living animal, she found exceedingly laborious.[14] She had travelled on for some time, in a sullen humour, when she halted suddenly in fright, for she had almost trod upon the Giant's shadow, which was stretching towards her across the plain. And now, lifting up her eyes, she saw the monster of a Giant himself, who had been bathing in the River, and was just come out,[15] and she knew not how she should avoid him. The moment he perceived her, he began saluting her in sport, and the hands of his shadow soon caught hold of the basket. With dexterous ease they picked away from it a Cabbage, an Artichoke and an Onion, and brought them to the Giant's mouth, who then went his way up the River, and let the Woman go in peace.

She considered whether it would not be better to return, and supply from her garden the pieces she had lost; and amid these doubts, she still kept walking on, so that in a little while she was at the bank of the River. She sat long waiting for the Ferryman, whom she perceived at last, steering over with a very singular traveller. A young, noble-looking, handsome man, whom she could not gaze upon enough, stept out of the boat.

"What is it you bring?" cried the old Man.—"The greens which those two Will-o'-wisps owe you," said the Woman, pointing to her ware. As the Ferryman found only two of each sort, he grew angry, and declared he would have none of them. The Woman earnestly entreated him to take them; told

[14] Why so? Is it because with 'lifeless things' (with inanimate *machinery*) all goes like clock-work, which it is, and 'the basket hovers aloft;' while with living things (were it but the culture of forest-trees) poor Endeavour has more difficulty?—D. T. Or is it chiefly because a Tale must be a Tale?—O. Y.

[15] Very proper in the huge Loggerhead *Superstition*, to bathe himself in the element of TIME, and get refreshment thereby.—D. T.

him that she could not now go home, and that her burden for the way which still remained was very heavy. He stood by his refusal, and assured her that it did not rest with him. "What belongs to me," said he, "I must leave lying nine hours in a heap, touching none of it, till I have given the River its third." After much higgling, the old Man at last replied: "There is still another way. If you like to pledge yourself to the River, and declare yourself its debtor, I will take the six pieces; but there is some risk in it."—"If I keep my word, I shall run no risk?"—"Not the smallest. Put your hand into the stream," continued he, "and promise that within four-and-twenty hours you will pay the debt."

The old Woman did so; but what was her affright, when on drawing out her hand, she found it black as coal! She loudly scolded the old Ferryman; declared that her hands had always been the fairest part of her; that in spite of her hard work, she had all along contrived to keep these nobler members white and dainty. She looked at the hand with indignation, and exclaimed in a despairing tone: "Worse and worse! Look, it is vanishing entirely; it is grown far smaller than the other."[16]

"For the present it but seems so," said the old Man; "if you do not keep your word, however, it may prove so in earnest. The hand will gradually diminish, and at length disappear altogether, though you have the use of it as formerly. Everything as usual you will be able to perform with it, only nobody will see it."—"I had rather that I could not use it, and no one could observe the want," cried she: "but what of that, I will keep my word, and rid myself of this black skin, and all anxieties about it." Thereupon she hastily took up her basket, which mounted of itself over her head, and hovered free above her in the air, as she hurried after the Youth, who was walking softly and thoughtfully down the bank. His noble form and strange dress had made a deep impression on her.

His breast was covered with a glittering coat of mail; in whose wavings might be traced every motion of his fair body. From his shoulders hung a purple cloak; around his uncovered head flowed abundant brown hair in beautiful locks: his graceful face, and his well-formed feet were exposed to the scorching of the sun. With bare soles, he walked composedly over the hot sand; and a deep inward sorrow seemed to blunt him against all external things.

The garrulous old Woman tried to lead him into conversation; but with his short answers he gave her small encouragement or information; so that in the end, notwithstanding the beauty of his eyes, she grew tired of speaking with him to no purpose, and took leave of him with these words: "You walk too slow for me, worthy sir; I must not lose a moment, for I have to pass the River on the green Snake, and carry this fine present from my husband to the fair Lily." So saying she stept faster forward; but the fair Youth pushed on with equal speed, and hastened to keep up with her. "You are going to the fair Lily!" cried he; "then our roads are the same. But what present is this you are bringing her?"

"Sir," said the Woman, "it is hardly fair, after so briefly dismissing the

[16] A dangerous thing to pledge yourself to the Time-River;—as many a National Debt, and the like, blackening, bewitching the 'beautiful hand' of Endeavour, can witness.—D. T. Heavens!—O. Y.

questions I put to you, to inquire with such vivacity about my secrets. But if you like to barter, and tell me your adventures, I will not conceal from you how it stands with me and my presents." They soon made a bargain; the dame disclosed her circumstances to him; told the history of the Pug, and let him see the singular gift.

He lifted this natural curiosity from the basket, and took Mops, who seemed as if sleeping softly, into his arms. "Happy beast!" cried he; "thou wilt be touched by her hands, thou wilt be made alive by her; while the living are obliged to fly from her presence to escape a mournful doom. Yet why say I mournful? Is it not far sadder and more frightful to be injured by her look, than it would be to die by her hand? Behold me," said he to the Woman; "at my years, what a miserable fate have I to undergo! This mail which I have honourably borne in war, this purple which I sought to merit by a wise reign, Destiny has left me; the one as a useless burden, the other as an empty ornament. Crown, and sceptre, and sword are gone; and I am as bare and needy as any other son of earth; for so unblessed are her bright eyes, that they take from every living creature they look-on all its force, and those whom the touch of her hand does not kill are changed to the state of shadows wandering alive."

Thus did he continue to bewail, nowise contenting the old Woman's curiosity, who wished for information not so much of his internal as of his external situation. She learned neither the name of his father, nor of his kingdom. He stroked the hard Mops, whom the sunbeams and the bosom of the youth had warmed as if he had been living. He inquired narrowly about the Man with the Lamp, about the influences of the sacred light, appearing to expect much good from it in his melancholy case.

Amid such conversation, they descried from afar the majestic arch of the Bridge, which extended from the one bank to the other, glittering with the strangest colours in the splendours of the sun. Both were astonished; for until now they had never seen this edifice so grand. "How!" cried the Prince, "was it not beautiful enough, as it stood before our eyes, piled out of jasper and agate? Shall we not fear to tread it, now that it appears combined, in graceful complexity of emerald and chrysopras and chrysolite?" Neither of them knew the alteration that had taken place upon the Snake: for it was indeed the Snake, who every day at noon curved herself over the River, and stood forth in the form of a bold-swelling bridge.[17] The travellers stept upon it with a reverential feeling, and passed over it in silence.

No sooner had they reached the other shore, than the bridge began to heave and stir; in a little while, it touched the surface of the water, and the green Snake in her proper form came gliding after the wanderers. They had scarcely thanked her for the privilege of crossing on her back, when they found that, besides those three, there must be other persons in the company, whom their eyes could not discern. They heard a hissing, which the Snake also answered with a hissing; they listened, and at length caught what follows: "We shall first look about us in the fair Lily's Park," said a pair of alternating voices; "and then request you at nightfall, so soon as we are anywise presentable, to introduce us to this paragon of beauty. At the shore of the great Lake you

[17] If aught can overspan the Time-River, then what but Understanding, but Thought, in its moment of plenitude, in its favourable noon-moment?—D. T.

will find us."—"Be it so," replied the Snake; and a hissing sound died away in the air.

Our three travellers now consulted in what order they should introduce themselves to the fair Lady; for however many people might be in her company, they were obliged to enter and depart singly, under pain of suffering very hard severities.

The Woman with the metamorphosed Pug in the basket first approached the garden, looking round for her Patroness; who was not difficult to find, being just engaged in singing to her harp. The finest tones proceeded from her, first like circles on the surface of the still lake, then like a light breath they set the grass and the bushes in motion. In a green enclosure, under the shadow of a stately group of many diverse trees, was she seated; and again did she enchant the eyes, the ears and the heart of the Woman, who approached with rapture, and swore within herself that since she saw her last, the fair one had grown fairer than ever. With eager gladness, from a distance, she expressed her reverence and admiration for the lovely maiden. "What a happiness to see you! what a Heaven does your presence spread around you! How charmingly the harp is leaning on your bosom, how softly your arms surround it, how it seems as if longing to be near you, and how it sounds so meekly under the touch of your slim fingers! Thrice-happy youth, to whom it were permitted to be there!"

So speaking she approached; the fair Lily raised her eyes; let her hands drop from the harp, and answered: "Trouble me not with untimely praise; I feel my misery but the more deeply. Look here, at my feet lies the poor Canary-bird, which used so beautifully to accompany my singing; it would sit upon my harp, and was trained not to touch me; but today, while I, refreshed by sleep, was raising a peaceful morning hymn, and my little singer was pouring forth his harmonious tones more gaily than ever, a Hawk darts over my head; the poor little creature, in affright, takes refuge in my bosom, and I feel the last palpitations of its departing life. The plundering Hawk indeed was caught by my look, and fluttered fainting down into the water; but what can his punishment avail me? my darling is dead, and his grave will but increase the mournful bushes of my garden."

"Take courage, fairest Lily!" cried the Woman, wiping off a tear, which the story of the hapless maiden had called into her eyes; "compose yourself; my old man bids me tell you to moderate your lamenting, to look upon the greatest misfortune as a forerunner of the greatest happiness, for the time is at hand; and truly," continued she, "the world is going strangely on of late. Do but look at my hand, how black it is! As I live and breathe, it is grown far smaller: I must hasten, before it vanish altogether! Why did I engage to do the Will-o'-wisps a service, why did I meet the Giant's shadow, and dip my hand in the River? Could you not afford me a single cabbage, an artichoke and an onion? I would give them to the River, and my hand were white as ever, so that I could almost show it with one of yours."

"Cabbages and onions thou mayest still find; but artichokes thou wilt search for in vain. No plant in my garden bears either flowers or fruit; but every twig that I break, and plant upon the grave of a favourite, grows green straightway, and shoots up in fair boughs. All these groups, these bushes, these groves my hard destiny has so raised around me. These pines stretching out

like parasols, these obelisks of cypresses, these colossal oaks and beeches, were all little twigs planted by my hand, as mournful memorials in a soil that otherwise is barren." [18]

To this speech the old Woman had paid little heed; she was looking at her hand, which, in presence of the fair Lily, seemed every moment growing blacker and smaller. She was about to snatch her basket and hasten off, when she noticed that the best part of her errand had been forgotten. She lifted out the onyx Pug, and set him down, not far from the fair one, in the grass. "My husband," said she, "sends you this memorial; you know that you can make a jewel live by touching it. This pretty faithful dog will certainly afford you much enjoyment; and my grief at losing him is brightened only by the thought that he will be in your possession."

The fair Lily viewed the dainty creature with a pleased and, as it seemed, with an astonished look. "Many signs combine," said she, "that breathe some hope into me: but ah! is it not a natural deception which makes us fancy, when misfortunes crowd upon us, that a better day is near?

"What can these many signs avail me?
My Singer's Death, thy coal-black Hand?
This Dog of Onyx, that can never fail me?
And coming at the Lamp's command?

From human joys removed forever,
With sorrows compassed round I sit:
Is there a Temple at the River?
Is there a Bridge? Alas, not yet!"

The good old dame had listened with impatience to this singing, which the fair Lily accompanied with her harp, in a way that would have charmed any other. She was on the point of taking leave, when the arrival of the green Snake again detained her. The Snake had caught the last lines of the song, and on this matter forthwith began to speak comfort to the fair Lily.

"The prophecy of the Bridge is fulfilled!" cried the Snake: "you may ask this worthy dame how royally the arch looks now. What formerly was untransparent jasper, or agate, allowing but a gleam of light to pass about its edges, is now become transparent precious stone. No beryl is so clear, no emerald so beautiful of hue."

"I wish you joy of it," said Lily; "but you will pardon me if I regard the prophecy as yet unaccomplished. The lofty arch of your bridge can still but admit foot-passengers; and it is promised us that horses and carriages and travellers of every sort shall, at the same moment, cross this bridge in both directions. Is there not something said, too, about pillars, which are to arise of themselves from the waters of the River?"

The old Woman still kept her eyes fixed on her hand; she here interrupted their dialogue, and was taking leave. "Wait a moment," said the fair Lily, "and carry my little bird with you. Bid the Lamp change it into topaz; I will enliven it by my touch; with your good Mops it shall form my dearest pastime: but hasten, hasten; for, at sunset, intolerable putrefaction will

[18] In SUPERNATURALISM truly, what is there either of flower or of fruit; Nothing that will (altogether) content the greedy Time-River. Stupendous, funereal sacred groves, 'in a soil that otherwise is barren!'—D. T.

fasten on the hapless bird, and tear asunder the fair combination of its form forever."

The old Woman laid the little corpse, wrapped in soft leaves, into her basket, and hastened away.

"However it may be," said the Snake, recommencing their interrupted dialogue, "the Temple is built."

"But it is not at the River," said the fair one.

"It is yet resting in the depths of the Earth," said the Snake; "I have seen the Kings and conversed with them."

"But when will they arise?" inquired Lily.

The Snake replied: "I heard resounding in the Temple these deep words, *The time is at hand.*"

A pleasing cheerfulness spread over the fair Lily's face: "'Tis the second time," said she, "that I have heard these happy words today: when will the day come for me to hear them thrice?"

She arose, and immediately there came a lovely maiden from the grove, and took away her harp. Another followed her, and folded-up the fine carved ivory stool, on which the fair one had been sitting, and put the silvery cushion under her arm. A third then made her appearance, with a large parasol worked with pearls; and looked whether Lily would require her in walking. These three maidens were beyond expression beautiful; and yet their beauty but exalted that of Lily, for it was plain to every one that they could never be compared to her.[19]

Meanwhile the fair one had been looking, with a satisfied aspect, at the strange onyx Mops. She bent down and touched him, and that instant he started up. Gaily he looked around, ran hither and thither, and at last, in his kindest manner, hastened to salute his benefactress. She took him in her arms, and pressed him to her. "Cold as thou art," cried she, "and though but a half-life works in thee, thou art welcome to me; tenderly will I love thee, prettily will I play with thee, softly caress thee, and firmly press thee to my bosom." She then let him go, chased him from her, called him back, and played so daintily with him, and ran about so gaily and so innocently with him on the grass, that with new rapture you viewed and participated in her joy, as a little while ago her sorrow had attuned every heart to sympathy.

This cheerfulness, these graceful sports were interrupted by the entrance of the woful Youth. He stepped forward, in his former guise and aspect; save that the heat of the day appeared to have fatigued him still more, and in the presence of his mistress he grew paler every moment. He bore upon his hand a Hawk, which was sitting quiet as a dove, with its body shrunk, and its wings drooping.

"It is not kind in thee," cried Lily to him, "to bring that hateful thing before my eyes, the monster, which today has killed my little singer."

"Blame not the unhappy bird!" replied the Youth; "rather blame thyself and thy destiny; and leave me to keep beside me the companion of my woe."

Meanwhile Mops ceased not teasing the fair Lily; and she replied to her transparent favourite, with friendly gestures. She clapped her hands to scare him off; then ran, to entice him after her. She tried to get him when he

[19] Who are these three? Faith, Hope and Charity, or others of that kin?—D. T. Faith, Hope and Fiddlestick!—O. Y.

fled, and she chased him away when he attempted to press near her. The Youth looked on in silence, with increasing anger; but at last, when she took the odious beast, which seemed to him unutterably ugly, on her arm, pressed it to her white bosom, and kissed its black snout with her heavenly lips, his patience altogether failed him, and full of desperation he exclaimed: "Must I, who by a baleful fate exist beside thee, perhaps to the end, in an absent presence; who by thee have lost my all, my very self; must I see before my eyes, that so unnatural a monster can charm thee into gladness, can awaken thy attachment, and enjoy thy embrace? Shall I any longer keep wandering to and fro, measuring my dreary course to that side of the River and to this? No, there is still a spark of the old heroic spirit sleeping in my bosom; let it start this instant into its expiring flame! If stones may rest in thy bosom, let me be changed to stone; if thy touch kills, I will die by thy hands."

So saying he made a violent movement; the Hawk flew from his finger, but he himself rushed towards the fair one; she held out her hands to keep him off, and touched him only the sooner. Consciousness forsook him; and she felt with horror the beloved burden lying on her bosom. With a shriek she started back, and the gentle Youth sank lifeless from her arms upon the ground.

The misery had happened! The sweet Lily stood motionless gazing on the corpse. Her heart seemed to pause in her bosom; and her eyes were without tears. In vain did Mops try to gain from her any kindly gesture; with her friend, the world for her was all dead as the grave. Her silent despair did not look round for help; she knew not of any help.

On the other hand, the Snake bestirred herself the more actively; she seemed to meditate deliverance; and in fact her strange movements served at least to keep away, for a little, the immediate consequences of the mischief. With her limber body, she formed a wide circle round the corpse, and seizing the end of her tail between her teeth, she lay quite still.

Ere long one of Lily's fair waiting-maids appeared; brought the ivory folding-stool, and with friendly beckoning constrained her mistress to sit down on it. Soon afterwards there came a second; she had in her hand a fire-coloured veil, with which she rather decorated than concealed the fair Lily's head. The third handed her the harp, and scarcely had she drawn the gorgeous instrument towards her, and struck some tones from its strings, when the first maid returned with a clear round mirror; took her station opposite the fair one; caught her looks in the glass, and threw back to her the loveliest image that was to be found in Nature.[20] Sorrow heightened her beauty, the veil her charms, the harp her grace; and deeply as you wished to see her mournful situation altered, not less deeply did you wish to keep her image, as she now looked, forever present with you.

With a still look at the mirror, she touched the harp; now melting tones

[20] Does not man's soul *rest* by Faith, and look in the *mirror* of Faith? Does not Hope 'decorate rather than conceal'? Is not Charity (Love) the beginning of *music*?—Behold too, how the Serpent, in this great hour, has made herself a Serpent-of-Eternity; and (even as genuine THOUGHT, in our age, has to do for so much) preserves the seeming-dead within her folds, that suspended animation issue not in noisome, horrible, irrevocable dissolution.—D. T.

proceeded from the strings, now her pain seemed to mount, and the music in strong notes responded to her woe; sometimes she opened her lips to sing, but her voice failed her; and ere long her sorrow melted into tears, two maidens caught her helpfully in their arms, the harp sank from her bosom, scarcely could the quick servant snatch the instrument and carry it aside.

"Who gets us the Man with the Lamp, before the Sun set?" hissed the Snake faintly, but audibly: the maids looked at one another, and Lily's tears fell faster. At this moment came the Woman with the Basket, panting and altogether breathless. "I am lost, and maimed for life!" cried she; "see how my hand is almost vanished; neither Ferryman nor Giant would take me over, because I am the River's debtor; in vain did I promise hundreds of cabbages and hundreds of onions; they will take no more than three; and no artichoke is now to be found in all this quarter."

"Forget your own care," said the Snake, "and try to bring help here; perhaps it may come to yourself also. Haste with your utmost speed to seek the Will-o'-wisps; it is too light for you to see them, but perhaps you will hear them laughing and hopping to and fro. If they be speedy, they may cross upon the Giant's shadow, and seek the Man with the Lamp, and send him to us."

The Woman hurried off at her quickest pace, and the Snake seemed expecting as impatiently as Lily the return of the Flames. Alas! the beam of the sinking Sun was already gilding only the highest summits of the trees in the thicket, and long shadows were stretching over lake and meadow; the Snake hitched up and down impatiently, and Lily dissolved in tears.

In this extreme need, the Snake kept looking round on all sides; for she was afraid every moment that the Sun would set, and corruption penetrate the magic circle, and the fair youth immediately moulder away. At last she noticed sailing high in the air, with purple red feathers, the Prince's Hawk, whose breast was catching the last beams of the Sun. She shook herself for joy at this good omen; nor was she deceived; for shortly afterwards the Man with the Lamp was seen gliding towards them across the Lake, fast and smoothly, as if he had been travelling on skates.

The Snake did not change her posture; but Lily rose and called to him: "What good spirit sends thee, at the moment when we were desiring thee, and needing thee, so much?"

"The spirit of my Lamp," replied the Man, "has impelled me, and the Hawk has conducted me. My Lamp sparkles when I am needed, and I just look about me in the sky for a signal; some bird or meteor points to the quarter towards which I am to turn. Be calm, fairest Maiden! Whether I can help, I know not; an individual helps not, but he who combines himself with many at the proper hour. We will postpone the evil, and keep hoping. Hold thy circle fast," continued he, turning to the Snake; then set himself upon a hillock beside her, and illuminated the dead body. "Bring the little Bird[21] hither too, and lay it in the circle!" The maidens took the little corpse from the basket, which the old Woman had left standing, and did as he directed.

[21] What are the Hawk and this Canary-bird, which here prove so destructive to one another? Ministering servants, implements, of these two divided Halves of the Human Soul; name them I will not; more is not written.—D. T.

Meanwhile the Sun had set; and as the darkness increased, not only the Snake and the old Man's Lamp began shining in their fashion, but also Lily's veil gave-out a soft light, which gracefully tinged, as with a meek dawning red, her pale cheeks and her white robe. The party looked at one another, silently reflecting; care and sorrow were mitigated by a sure hope.

It was no unpleasing entrance, therefore, that the Woman made, attended by the two gay Flames, which in truth appeared to have been very lavish in the interim, for they had again become extremely meagre; yet they only bore themselves the more prettily for that, towards Lily and the other ladies. With great tact and expressiveness, they said a multitude of rather common things to these fair persons; and declared themselves particularly ravished by the charm which the gleaming veil[22] spread over Lily and her attendants. The ladies modestly cast down their eyes, and the praise of their beauty made them really beautiful. All were peaceful and calm, except the old Woman. In spite of the assurance of her husband, that her hand could diminish no farther, while the Lamp shone on it, she asserted more than once, that if things went on thus, before midnight this noble member would have utterly vanished.

The Man with the Lamp had listened attentively to the conversation of the Lights; and was gratified that Lily had been cheered, in some measure, and amused by it. And, in truth, midnight had arrived they knew not how. The old Man looked to the stars, and then began speaking: "We are assembled at the propitious hour; let each perform his task, let each do his duty; and a universal happiness will swallow-up our individual sorrows, as a universal grief consumes individual joys."

At these words arose a wondrous hubbub;[23] for all the persons in the party spoke aloud, each for himself, declaring what they had to do; only the three maids were silent; one of them had fallen asleep beside the harp, another near the parasol, the third by the stool; and you could not blame them much, for it was late. The Fiery Youths, after some passing compliments which they devoted to the waiting-maids, had turned their sole attention to the Princess, as alone worthy of exclusive homage.

"Take the mirror," said the Man to the Hawk; "and with the first sunbeam illuminate the three sleepers, and awake them, with light reflected from above."

The Snake now began to move; she loosened her circle, and rolled slowly, in large rings, forward to the River. The two Will-o'-wisps followed with a solemn air: you would have taken them for the most serious Flames in Nature. The old Woman and her husband seized the Basket, whose mild light they had scarcely observed till now; they lifted it at both sides, and it grew still larger and more luminous; they lifted the body of the Youth into it, laying the Canary-bird upon his breast; the Basket rose into the air and

[22] Have not your march-of-intellect Literators always expressed themselves particularly ravished with any glitter from a veil of *Hope;* with 'progress of the species,' and the like?—D. T.

[23] Too true: dost thou not hear it, reader? In this our Revolutionary 'twelfth hour of the night,' all persons speak aloud (some of them by cannon and drums!), 'declaring what they have to do;' and Faith, Hope and Charity (after a few passing compliments from the Belles-Lettres Department), thou seest, have *fallen asleep!*—D. T.

hovered above the old Woman's head, and she followed the Will-o'-wisps on foot. The fair Lily took Mops on her arm, and followed the Woman; the Man with the Lamp concluded the procession; and the scene was curiously illuminated by these many lights.

But it was with no small wonder that the party saw, when they approached the River, a glorious arch mount over it, by which the helpful Snake was affording them a glittering path. If by day they had admired the beautiful transparent precious stones, of which the Bridge seemed formed; by night they were astonished at its gleaming brilliancy. On the upper side the clear circle marked itself sharp against the dark sky, but below, vivid beams were darting to the centre, and exhibiting the airy firmness of the edifice. The procession slowly moved across it; and the Ferryman, who saw it from his hut afar off, considered with astonishment the gleaming circle, and the strange lights which were passing over it.[24]

No sooner had they reached the other shore, than the arch began, in its usual way, to swag up and down, and with a wavy motion to approach the water. The Snake then came on land, the Basket placed itself upon the ground, and the Snake again drew her circle round it. The old Man stooped towards her, and said: "What hast thou resolved on?"

"To sacrifice myself rather than be sacrificed," replied the Snake; "promise me that thou wilt leave no stone on shore."

The old Man promised; then addressing Lily: "Touch the Snake," said he, "with thy left hand, and thy lover with thy right." Lily knelt, and touched the Snake and the Prince's body. The latter in the instant seemed to come to life; he moved in the Basket, nay he raised himself into a sitting posture; Lily was about to clasp him; but the old Man held her back, and himself assisted the Youth to rise, and led him forth from the Basket and the circle.

The Prince was standing; the Canary-bird was fluttering on his shoulder; there was life again in both of them, but the spirit had not yet returned; the fair Youth's eyes were open, yet he did not see, at least he seemed to look on all without participation. Scarcely had their admiration of this incident a little calmed, when they observed how strangely it had fared in the mean while with the Snake. Her fair taper body had crumbled into thousands and thousands of shining jewels: the old Woman reaching at her Basket had chanced to come against the circle; and of the shape or structure of the Snake there was now nothing to be seen, only a bright ring of luminous jewels was lying in the grass.[25]

The old Man forthwith set himself to gather the stones into the Basket; a task in which his wife assisted him. They next carried the Basket to an elevated point on the bank; and here the man threw its whole lading, not without contradiction from the fair one and his wife, who would gladly have retained some part of it, down into the River. Like gleaming twinkling stars

[24] Well he might, worthy old man; as Pope Pius, for example, did, when he lived in Fontainebleau!—D. T. As our Bishops, when voting for the Reform Bill?—O. Y.

[25] So! Your Logics, Mechanical Philosophies, Politics, Sciences, your whole modern System of THOUGHT, is to decease; and old ENDEAVOUR, 'grasping at her basket,' shall 'come against' the inanimate remains, and 'only a bright ring of luminous jewels' shall be left there! Mark well, however, what next becomes of it.—D. T.

the stones floated down with the waves; and you could not say whether they lost themselves in the distance, or sank to the bottom.

"Gentlemen," said he with the Lamp, in a respectful tone to the Lights, "I will now show you the way, and open you the passage; but you will do us an essential service, if you please to unbolt the door, by which the Sanctuary must be entered at present, and which none but you can unfasten."

The Lights made a stately bow of assent, and kept their place. The old Man of the Lamp went foremost into the rock, which opened at his presence; the Youth followed him, as if mechanically; silent and uncertain, Lily kept at some distance from him; the old Woman would not be left, and stretched-out her hand, that the light of her husband's Lamp might still fall upon it. The rear was closed by the two Will-o'-wisps, who bent the peaks of their flames towards one another, and appeared to be engaged in conversation.

They had not gone far till the procession halted in front of a large brazen door, the leaves of which were bolted with a golden lock. The Man now called upon the Lights to advance; who required small entreaty, and with their pointed flames soon ate both bar and lock.

The brass gave a loud clang, as the doors sprang suddenly asunder; and the stately figures of the Kings appeared within the Sanctuary, illuminated by the entering Lights. All bowed before these dread sovereigns, especially the Flames made a profusion of the daintiest reverences.

After a pause, the gold King asked: "Whence come ye?" "From the world," said the old Man.—"Whither go ye?" said the silver King. "Into the world," replied the Man.—"What would ye with us?" cried the brazen King. "Accompany you," replied the Man.

The composite King was about to speak, when the gold one addressed the Lights, who had got too near him: "Take yourselves away from me, my metal was not made for you." Thereupon they turned to the silver King, and clasped themselves about him; and his robe glittered beautifully in their yellow brightness. "You are welcome," said he, "but I cannot feed you; satisfy yourselves elsewhere, and bring me your light." They removed; and gliding past the brazen King, who did not seem to notice them, they fixed on the compounded King. "Who will govern the world?" cried he, with a broken voice. "He who stands upon his feet," replied the old Man.—"I am he," said the mixed King. "We shall see," replied the Man; "for the time is at hand."

The fair Lily fell upon the old Man's neck, and kissed him cordially. "Holy Sage!" cried she, "a thousand times I thank thee; for I hear that fateful word the third time." She had scarcely spoken, when she clasped the old Man still faster; for the ground began to move beneath them; the Youth and the old Woman also held by one another; the Lights alone did not regard it.

You could feel plainly that the whole temple was in motion; as a ship that softly glides away from the harbour, when her anchors are lifted; the depths of the Earth seemed to open for the Building as it went along. It struck on nothing; no rock came in its way.

For a few instants, a small rain seemed to drizzle from the opening of the dome; the old Man held the fair Lily fast, and said to her: "We are now beneath the River; we shall soon be at the mark." Ere long they thought

the Temple made a halt; but they were in an error; it was mounting upwards.

And now a strange uproar rose above their heads. Planks and beams in disordered combination now came pressing and crashing in at the opening of the dome. Lily and the Woman started to a side; the Man with the Lamp laid hold of the Youth, and kept standing still. The little cottage of the Ferryman,—for it was this which the Temple in ascending had severed from the ground and carried up with it,—sank gradually down, and covered the old Man and the Youth.

The women screamed aloud, and the Temple shook, like a ship running unexpectedly aground. In sorrowful perplexity, the Princess and her old attendant wandered round the cottage in the dawn; the door was bolted, and to their knocking no one answered. They knocked more loudly, and were not a little struck, when at length the wood began to ring. By virtue of the Lamp locked up in it, the hut had been converted from the inside to the outside into solid silver. Ere long too its form changed; for the noble metal shook aside the accidental shape of planks, posts and beams, and stretched itself out into a noble case of beaten ornamented workmanship. Thus a fair little temple stood erected in the middle of a large one; or if you will, an Altar worthy of the Temple.[26]

By a staircase which ascended from within, the noble Youth now mounted aloft, lighted by the old Man with the Lamp; and, as it seemed, supported by another, who advanced in a white short robe, with a silver rudder in his hand; and was soon recognised as the Ferryman, the former possessor of the cottage.

The fair Lily mounted the outer steps, which led from the floor of the Temple to the Altar; but she was still obliged to keep herself apart from her Lover. The old Woman, whose hand in the absence of the Lamp had grown still smaller, cried: "Am I, then, to be unhappy after all? Among so many miracles, can there be nothing done to save my hand?" Her husband pointed to the open door, and said to her: "See, the day is breaking; haste, bathe thyself in the River."—"What an advice!" cried she; "it will make me all black; it will make me vanish altogether; for my debt is not yet paid."—"Go," said the Man, "and do as I advise thee; all debts are now paid."

The old Woman hastened away; and at that moment appeared the rising Sun, upon the rim of the dome. The old Man stept between the Virgin and the Youth, and cried with a loud voice: "There are three which have rule on Earth; Wisdom, Appearance and Strength." At the first word, the gold King rose; at the second, the silver one; and at the third, the brass King slowly rose, while the mixed King on a sudden very awkwardly plumped down.[27]

Whoever noticed him could scarcely keep from laughing, solemn as the

[26] Good! The old Church, shaken down 'in disordered combination,' is admitted, in this way, into the new perennial Temple of the Future; and, clarified into enduring silver by the Lamp, becomes an Altar worthy to stand there. The Ferryman too is not forgotten. —D. T.

[27] Dost thou note this, O reader; and look back with new-clearness on former things? A gold King, a silver and a brazen King: Wisdom, dignified Appearance, Strength: these three harmoniously united bear rule; *dis*harmoniously cobbled together in sham union (as in the foolish composite King of our foolish 'transition era'). they, once the gold (or wisdom) is *all* out of them, 'very awkwardly plump down.'—D. T.

moment was; for he was not sitting, he was not lying, he was not leaning, but shapelessly sunk together.[28]

The Lights,[29] who till now had been employed upon him, drew to a side; they appeared, although pale in the morning radiance, yet once more well-fed, and in good burning condition; with their peaked tongues, they had dexterously licked-out the gold veins of the colossal figure to its very heart. The irregular vacuities which this occasioned had continued empty for a time, and the figure had maintained its standing posture. But when at last the very tenderest filaments were eaten out, the image crashed suddenly together; and that, alas, in the very parts which continue unaltered when one sits down; whereas the limbs, which should have bent, sprawled themselves out unbowed and stiff. Whoever *could* not laugh was obliged to turn away his eyes; this miserable shape and no-shape was offensive to behold.

The Man with the Lamp now led the handsome Youth, who still kept gazing vacantly before him, down from the Altar, and straight to the brazen King. At the feet of this mighty Potentate lay a sword in a brazen sheath. The young man girt it round him. "The sword on the left, the right free!" cried the brazen voice. They next proceeded to the silver King; he bent his sceptre to the Youth; the latter seized it with his left hand, and the King in a pleasing voice said: "Feed the sheep!" On turning to the golden King, he stooped with gestures of paternal blessing, and pressing his oaken garland on the young man's head, said: "Understand what is highest!"

During this progress, the old Man had carefully observed the Prince. After girding-on the sword, his breast swelled, his arms waved, and his feet trod firmer; when he took the sceptre in his hand, his strength appeared to soften, and by an unspeakable charm to become still more subduing; but as the oaken garland came to deck his hair, his features kindled, his eyes gleamed with inexpressible spirit, and the first word of his mouth was "Lily!"

"Dearest Lily!" cried he, hastening up the silver stairs to her, for she had viewed his progress from the pinnacle of the Altar; "Dearest Lily! what more precious can a man, equipt with all, desire for himself than innocence and the still affection which thy bosom brings me? O my friend!" continued he turning to the old Man, and looking at the three statues; "glorious and secure is the kingdom of our fathers; but thou hast forgotten the fourth power, which rules the world, earlier, more universally, more certainly, the power of Love." With these words, he fell upon the lovely maiden's neck; she had cast away her veil, and her cheeks were tinged with the fairest, most imperishable red.

Here the old Man said with a smile: "Love does not rule; but it trains,[30] and that is more."

Amid this solemnity, this happiness and rapture, no one had observed that it was now broad day; and all at once, on looking through the open portal, a crowd of altogether unexpected objects met the eye. A large space surrounded with pillars formed the fore-court, at the end of which was seen a broad and

[28] As, for example, does not Charles X. (one of the poor fractional composite Realities emblemed herein) rest, even now, 'shapelessly enough sunk together,' at Holyrood in the city of Edinburgh?—D. T.

[29] March-of-intellect Lights were well capable of such a thing.—D. T.

[30] It fashions (*bildet*), or educates.—O. Y.

stately Bridge stretching with many arches across the River. It was furnished, on both sides, with commodious and magnificent colonnades for foot-travellers, many thousands of whom were already there, busily passing this way or that. The broad pavement in the centre was thronged with herds and mules, with horsemen and carriages, flowing like two streams, on their several sides, and neither interrupting the other. All admired the splendour and convenience of the structure; and the new King and his Spouse were delighted with the motion and activity of this great people, as they were already happy in their own mutual love.

"Remember the Snake in honour," said the Man with the Lamp; "thou owest her thy life; thy people owe her the Bridge, by which these neighbouring banks are now animated and combined into one land. Those swimming and shining jewels, the remains of her sacrificed body, are the piers of this royal bridge; upon these she has built and will maintain herself." [31]

The party were about to ask some explanation of this strange mystery, when there entered four lovely maidens at the portal of the Temple. By the Harp, the Parasol, and the Folding-stool, it was not difficult to recognise the waiting-maids of Lily; but the fourth, more beautiful than any of the rest, was an unknown fair one, and in sisterly sportfulness she hastened with them through the Temple, and mounted the steps of the Altar.[32]

"Wilt thou have better trust in me another time, good wife?" said the Man with the Lamp to the fair one: "Well for thee, and every living thing that bathes this morning in the River!"

The renewed and beautiful old Woman, of whose former shape no trace remained, embraced with young eager arms the Man with the Lamp, who kindly received her caresses. "If I am too old for thee," said he, smiling, "thou mayest choose another husband today; from this hour no marriage is of force, which is not contracted anew."

"Dost thou not know, then," answered she, "that thou too art grown younger?"—"It delights me if to thy young eyes I seem a handsome youth: I take thy hand anew, and am well content to live with thee another thousand years." [33]

The Queen welcomed her new friend, and went down with her into the interior of the Altar, while the King stood between his two men, looking towards the Bridge, and attentively contemplating the busy tumult of the people.

But his satisfaction did not last; for ere long he saw an object which excited his displeasure. The great Giant, who appeared not yet to have awoke completely from his morning sleep, came stumbling along the Bridge, producing great confusion all around him. As usual, he had risen stupefied with sleep, and had meant to bathe in the well-known bay of the River; instead of which

[31] Honour to her indeed! The Mechanical Philosophy, though dead, has not died and lived in vain; but her works are there: 'upon these *she*' (THOUGHT, new-born, in glorified shape) 'has built herself and will maintain herself;' and the Natural and Supernatural shall henceforth, thereby, be one.—D. T.

[32] Mark what comes of bathing in the TIME-River, at the entrance of a New Era!—D. T.

[33] And so REASON and ENDEAVOUR being once more married, and in the honeymoon, need we wish them joy?—D. T.

he found firm land, and plunged upon the broad pavement of the Bridge. Yet although he reeled into the midst of men and cattle in the clumsiest way, his presence, wondered at by all, was felt by none; but as the sunshine came into his eyes, and he raised his hands to rub them, the shadows of his monstrous fists moved to and fro behind him with such force and awkwardness, that men and beasts were heaped together in great masses, were hurt by such rude contact, and in danger of being pitched into the River.[34]

The King, as he saw this mischief, grasped with an involuntary movement at his sword; but he bethought himself, and looked calmly at his sceptre, then at the Lamp and the Rudder of his attendants. "I guess thy thoughts," said the Man with the Lamp; "but we and our gifts are powerless against this powerless monster. Be calm! He is doing hurt for the last time, and happily his shadow is not turned to us."

Meanwhile the Giant was approaching nearer; in astonishment at what he saw with open eyes, he had dropt his hands; he was now doing no injury, and came staring and agape into the fore-court.

He was walking straight to the door of the Temple, when all at once in the middle of the court, he halted, and was fixed to the ground. He stood there like a strong colossal statue, of reddish glittering stone, and his shadow pointed out the hours,[35] which were marked in a circle on the floor around him, not in numbers, but in noble and expressive emblems.

Much delighted was the King to see the monster's shadow turned to some useful purpose; much astonished was the Queen, who, on mounting from within the Altar, decked in royal pomp, with her virgins, first noticed the huge figure, which almost closed the prospect from the Temple to the Bridge.

Meanwhile the people had crowded after the Giant, as he ceased to move; they were walking round him, wondering at his metamorphosis. From him they turned to the Temple, which they now first appeared to notice,[36] and pressed towards the door.

At this instant the Hawk with the mirror soared aloft above the dome; caught the light of the Sun, and reflected it upon the group, which was standing on the Altar. The King, the Queen, and their attendants, in the dusty concave of the Temple, seemed illuminated by a heavenly splendour, and the people fell upon their faces. When the crowd had recovered and risen, the King with his followers had descended into the Altar, to proceed by secret passages into his palace; and the multitude dispersed about the Temple to content their curiosity. The three Kings that were standing erect they viewed with astonishment and reverence; but the more eager were they to discover what mass it could be that was hid behind the hangings, in the fourth niche; for by some hand or another, charitable decency had spread over the resting-place of the fallen King a gorgeous curtain, which no eye can penetrate, and no hand may dare to draw aside.

The people would have found no end to their gazing and their admiration,

[34] Thou rememberest the *Catholic Relief Bill;* witnessest the *Irish Education Bill?* Hast heard, five hundred times, that the 'Church' was 'in Danger,' and now at length believest it?—D. T. Is D. T. of the Fourth Estate, and Popish-Infidel, then?—O. Y.

[35] Bravo!—D. T.

[36] Now first; when the beast of a SUPERSTITION-Giant has got his quietus. Right!—D. T.

and the crowding multitude would have even suffocated one another in th Temple, had not their attention been again attracted to the open space.

Unexpectedly some gold-pieces, as if falling from the air, came tinklin down upon the marble flags; the nearest passers-by rushed thither to pic them up; the wonder was repeated several times, now here, now there. It easy to conceive that the shower proceeded from our two retiring Flames, wh wished to have a little sport here once more, and were thus gaily spending, e they went away, the gold which they had licked from the members of th sunken King. The people still ran eagerly about, pressing and pulling on another, even when the gold had ceased to fall. At length they graduall dispersed, and went their way; and to the present hour the Bridge is swarm ing with travellers, and the Temple is the most frequented on the whol Earth.[37]

[37] It is the Temple of the whole civilised Earth. Finally, may I take leave to conside this *Mährchen* as the deepest Poem of its sort in existence as the only true Prophec emitted for who knows how many centuries?—D. T. Certainly: England is a fre country.—O. Y.

No. 2.

NOVELLE.[1]

BY GOETHE.

[1832.]

THE spacious courts of the Prince's Castle were still veiled in thick mists of an autumnal morning; through which veil, meanwhile, as it melted into clearness, you could more or less discern the whole Hunter-company, on horseback and on foot, all busily astir. The hasty occupations of the nearest were distinguishable: there was lengthening, shortening of stirrup-leathers; there was handing of rifles and shot-pouches, there was putting of game-bags to rights; while the hounds, impatient in their leashes, threatened to drag their keepers off with them. Here and there, too, a horse showed spirit more than enough; driven-on by its fiery nature, or excited by the spur of its rider, who even now in the half-dusk could not repress a certain self-complacent wish to exhibit himself. All waited, however, on the Prince, who, taking leave of his young Consort, was now delaying too long.

United a short while ago, they already felt the happiness of consentaneous dispositions; both were of active vivid character; each willingly participated in the tastes and endeavours of the other. The Prince's father had already, in his time, discerned and improved the season when it became evident that all members of the commonwealth should pass their days in equal industry; should all, in equal working and producing, each in his kind, first earn, and then enjoy.

How well this had prospered was visible in these very days, when the chief market was a-holding, which you might well enough have named a fair. The Prince yestereven had led his Princess on horseback through the tumult of the heaped-up wares; and pointed out to her how, on this spot, the Mountain region met the Plain country in profitable barter: he could here, with the objects before him, awaken her attention to the various industry of his Land.

If the Prince at this time occupied himself and his servants almost exclusively with these pressing concerns, and in particular worked incessantly with his Finance-minister, yet would the Huntmaster too have his right; on

[1] FRASER'S MAGAZINE, No. 34.

whose pleading, the temptation could not be resisted to undertake, in this choice autumn weather, a Hunt that had already been postponed; and so for the household itself, and for the many stranger visitants, prepare a peculiar and singular festivity.

The Princess stayed behind with reluctance: but it was proposed to push far into the Mountains, and stir-up the peaceable inhabitants of the forests there with an unexpected invasion.

At parting, her lord failed not to propose a ride for her, with Friedrich, the Prince-Uncle, as escort: "I will leave thee," said he, "our Honorio too, as Equerry and Page, who will manage all." In pursuance of which words, he, in descending, gave to a handsome young man the needful injunctions; and soon thereafter disappeared with guests and train.

The Princess, who had waved her handkerchief to her husband while still down in the court, now retired to the back apartments, which commanded a free prospect towards the Mountains; and so much the lovelier, as the Castle itself stood on a sort of elevation, and thus, behind as well as before, afforded manifold magnificent views. She found the fine telescope still in the position where they had left it yestereven, when amusing themselves over bush and hill and forest-summit, with the lofty ruins of the primeval Stammburg, or Family Tower; which in the clearness of evening stood out noteworthy, as at that hour with its great light-and-shade masses, the best aspect of so venerable a memorial of old time was to be had. This morning too, with the approximating glasses, might be beautifully seen the autumnal tinge of the trees, many in kind and number, which had struggled up through the masonry, unhindered and undisturbed during long years. The fair dame, however, directed the tube somewhat lower, to a waste stony flat, over which the Hunting-train was to pass: she waited the moment with patience, and was not disappointed; for with the clearness and magnifying power of the instrument her glancing eyes plainly distinguished the Prince and the Head-Equerry; nay she forbore not again to wave her handkerchief, as some momentary pause and looking-back was fancied perhaps, rather than observed.

Prince-Uncle, Friedrich by name, now with announcement entered, attended by his Painter, who carried a large portfolio under his arm. "Dear Cousin," said the hale old gentleman, "we here present you with the Views of the Stammburg, taken on various sides to show how the mighty Pile, warred-on and warring, has from old time fronted the year and its weather; how here and there its wall had to yield, here and there rush down into waste ruins. However, we have now done much to make the wild mass accessible; for more there wants not to set every traveller, every visitor, into astonishment, into admiration."

As the Prince now exhibited the separate leaves, he continued: "Here where, advancing up the hollow-way, through the outer ring-walls, you reach the Fortress proper, rises against us a rock, the firmest of the whole mountain; on this there stands a tower built,—yet where Nature leaves off, and Art and Handicraft begin, no one can distinguish. Farther you perceive, sidewards, walls abutting on it, and donjons terrace-wise stretching down. But I speak wrong; for, to the eye, it is but a wood that encircles that old summit: these hundred-and-fifty years no axe has sounded there, and the massiest stems have on all sides sprung up; wherever you press inwards to the walls, the smooth

maple, the rough oak, the taper pine, with trunk and roots oppose you; round these we have to wind, and pick our footsteps with skill. Do but look how artfully our Master has brought the character of it on paper; how the roots and stems, the species of each distinguishable, twist themselves among the masonry, and the huge boughs come looping through the holes. It is a wilderness like no other; an accidentally unique locality, where ancient traces of the long-vanished power of Man, and the ever-living, ever-working power of Nature show themselves in the most earnest conflict."

Exhibiting another leaf, he went on: "What say you now to the Castle-court, which, become inaccessible by the falling-in of the old gate-tower, had for immemorial time been trodden by no foot? We sought to get at it by a side; have pierced through walls, blasted vaults asunder, and so provided a convenient but secret way. Inside it needed no clearance; here stretches a flat rock-summit, smoothed by Nature: but yet strong trees have, in spots, found luck and opportunity for rooting themselves there; they have softly but decidedly grown up, and now stretch out their boughs into the galleries where the knights once walked to and fro; nay through the doors and windows into the vaulted halls; out of which we would not drive them: they have even got the mastery, and may keep it. Sweeping away deep strata of leaves, we have found the notablest place, all smoothed, the like of which were perhaps not to be met with in the world.

"After all this, however, it is still to be remarked, and on the spot itself well worth examining, how on the steps that lead up to the main tower, a maple has struck root and fashioned itself to a stout tree, so that you hardly can with difficulty press by it, to mount the battlements and gaze over the unbounded prospect. Yet here too, you linger pleased in the shade; for that tree is it which, high over the whole, wondrously lifts itself into the air.

"Let us thank the brave Artist, then, who so deservingly in various pictures teaches us the whole, even as if we saw it: he has spent the fairest hours of the day and of the season therein, and for weeks long kept moving about these scenes. Here in this corner has there been, for him and the warder we gave him, a pleasant little dwelling fitted up. You could not think, my Best, what a lovely outlook into the country, into court and walls, he has got there. But now when all is once in outline, so pure, so characteristic, he may finish it down here at his ease. With these pictures we will decorate our garden-hall; and no one shall recreate his eyes over our regular parterres, our groves and shady walks, without wishing himself up there, to follow, in actual sight of the old and of the new, of the stubborn, inflexible, indestructible, and of the fresh, pliant, irresistible, what reflections and comparisons would rise for him."

Honorio entered, with notice that the horses were brought out; then said the Princess, turning to the Uncle: "Let us ride up; and you will show me in reality what you have here set before me in image. Ever since I came among you, I have heard of this undertaking; and now should like, of all things, to see with my own eyes what in the narrative seemed impossible, and in the depicting remains improbable."—"Not yet, my Love," answered the Prince: "What you here saw is what it can become and is becoming; for the present, much in the enterprise stands still amid impediments; Art must first be complete, if Nature is to shame it."—"Then let us ride at least upwards,

were it only to the foot: I have the greatest wish today to look about me far in the world."—"Altogether as you will," replied the Prince.—"Let us ride through the Town, however," continued the Lady, "over the great marketplace, where stands the innumerable crowd of booths, looking like a little city, like a camp. It is as if the wants and occupations of all the families in the land were turned outwards, assembled in this centre, and brought into the light of day: for the attentive observer can descry whatsoever it is that man performs and needs; you fancy, for the moment, there is no money necessary, that all business could be managed by barter, and so at bottom it is. Since the Prince, last night, set me on these reflections, it is pleasant to consider how here, where Mountain and Plain meet together, both so clearly speak out what they require and wish. For as the highlander can fashion the timber of his woods into a hundred shapes, and mould his iron for all manner of uses, so these others from below come to meet him with most manifold wares, in which often you can hardly discover the material or recognise the aim."

"I am aware," answered the Prince, "that my Nephew turns his utmost care to these things; for specially, on the present occasion, this main point comes to be considered, that one receive more than one gives out: which to manage is, in the long-run, the sum of all Political Economy, as of the smallest private housekeeping. Pardon me, however, my Best: I never like to ride through markets; at every step you are hindered and kept back; and then flames-up in my imagination the monstrous misery which, as it were, burnt itself into my eyes, when I witnessed one such world of wares go off in fire. I had scarcely got to——"

"Let us not lose the bright hours," interrupted the Princess; for the worthy man had already more than once afflicted her with the minute description of that mischance: how he, being on a long journey, resting in the best inn, on the marketplace which was just then swarming with a fair, had gone to bed exceedingly fatigued; and in the night-time been, by shrieks, and flames rolling up against his lodging, hideously awakened.

The Princess hastened to mount her favourite horse: and led, not through the backgate upwards, but through the foregate downwards, her reluctant-willing attendant; for who but would gladly have ridden by her side, who but would gladly have followed after her? And so Honorio too had, without regret, stayed back from the otherwise so wished-for Hunt, to be exclusively at her service.

As was to be anticipated, they could only ride through the market step by step: but the fair Lovely one enlivened every stoppage by some sprightly remark; "I repeat my lesson of yesternight," said she, "since Necessity is trying our patience." And in truth, the whole mass of men so crowded about the riders, that their progress was slow. The people gazed with joy at the young dame; and on so many smiling countenances might be read the pleasure they felt to see that the first woman in the land was also the fairest and gracefulest.

Promiscuously mingled stood Mountaineers, who had built their still dwellings amid rocks, firs and spruces; Lowlanders from hills, meadows and leas; craftsmen of the little towns; and what else had all assembled there. After a quiet glance, the Princess remarked to her attendant, how all these, whencesoever they came, had taken more stuff than necessary for their clothes, more

cloth and linen, more ribands for trimming. It is as if the women could not be bushy enough, the men not puffy enough, to please themselves.

"We will leave them that," answered the Uncle: "spend his superfluity on what he will, a man is happy in it; happiest when he therewith decks and dizens himself." The fair dame nodded assent.

So had they, by degrees, got upon a clear space, which led out to the suburbs; when, at the end of many small booths and stands, a larger edifice of boards showed itself, which was scarcely glanced at till an ear-lacerating bellow sounded forth from it. The feeding-hour of the wild-beasts, there exhibited, seemed to have come: the Lion let his forest- and desert-voice be heard in all vigour; the horses shuddered, and all had to remark how, in the peaceful ways and workings of the cultivated world, the king of the wilderness so fearfully announced himself. Coming nearer the booth, you could not overlook the variegated colossal pictures representing with violent colours and strong emblems those foreign beasts; to a sight of which the peaceful burgher was to be irresistibly enticed. The grim monstrous tiger was pouncing on a blackamoor, on the point of tearing him in shreds; a lion stood earnest and majestic, as if he saw no prey worthy of him; other wondrous particoloured creatures, beside these mighty ones, deserved less attention.

"As we come back," said the Princess, "we will alight and take a nearer view of these gentry."—"It is strange," observed the Prince, "that man always seeks excitement by Terror. Inside, there, the Tiger lies quite quiet in his cage; and here must he ferociously dart upon a black, that the people may fancy the like is to be seen within: of murder and sudden death, of burning and destruction, there is not enough, but balladsingers must at every corner keep repeating it. Good man will have himself frightened a little; to feel the better, in secret, how beautiful and laudable it is to draw breath in freedom."

Whatever of apprehensiveness from such bugbear images might have remained, was soon all and wholly effaced, as, issuing through the gate, our party entered on the cheerfulest of scenes. The road led first up the River, as yet but a small current, and bearing only light boats, but which by and by, as a renowned world-stream, would carry forth its name and waters, and enliven distant lands. They proceeded next through well-cultivated fruit-gardens and pleasure-grounds, softly ascending; and by degrees you could look about you, in the now disclosed, much-peopled region; till first a thicket, then a little wood admitted our riders, and the gracefulest localities refreshed and limited their view. A meadow-vale leading upwards, shortly before mown for the second time, velvet-like to look upon, and watered by a brook rushing briskly out copious at once from the uplands above, received them as with welcome; and so they approached a higher freer station; which, on issuing from the wood, after a stiff ascent, they gained; and could now descry, over new clumps of trees, the old Castle, the goal of their pilgrimage, rising in the distance, as pinnacle of the rock and forest. Backwards, again (for never did one mount hither without turning round), they caught, through accidental openings of the high trees, the Prince's Castle, on the left, lightened by the morning sun; the well-built higher quarter of the Town, softened under light smoke-clouds: and so on, rightwards the under Town, the River in several bendings, with its meadows and mills; on the farther side, an extensive fertile region.

Having satisfied themselves with the prospect, or rather, as usually happens when we look round from so high a station, become doubly eager for a wider, less limited view, they rode on, over a broad stony flat, where the mighty Ruin stood fronting them, as a green-crowned summit, a few old trees far down about its foot: they rode along; and so arrived there, just at the steepest, most inaccessible side. Great rocks jutting out from of old, insensible of every change, firm, well-founded, stood clenched together there; and so it towered upwards; what had fallen at intervals lay in huge plates and fragments confusedly heaped, and seemed to forbid the boldest any attempt. But the steep, the precipitous is inviting to youth: to undertake it, to storm and conquer it, is for young limbs an enjoyment. The Princess testified desire for an attempt; Honorio was at her hand; the Prince-Uncle, if easier to satisfy, took it cheerfully, and would show that he too had strength: the horses were to wait below among the trees; our climbers make for a certain point, where a huge projecting rock affords standing-room, and a prospect, which indeed is already passing over into the bird's-eye kind, yet folds itself together there picturesquely enough.

The sun, almost at its meridian, lent the clearest light; the Prince's Castle, with its compartments, main buildings, wings, domes and towers, lay clear and stately; the upper Town in its whole extent; into the lower also you could conveniently look, nay by the telescope distinguish the booths in the market-place. So furthersome an instrument Honorio would never leave behind: they looked at the River upwards and downwards; on this side, the mountainous, terrace-like, interrupted expanse, on that the upswelling, fruitful land, alternating in level and low hill; places innumerable; for it was long customary to dispute how many of them were here to be seen.

Over the great expanse lay a cheerful stillness, as is common at noon; when, as the Ancients were wont to say, Pan is asleep, and all Nature holds her breath not to awaken him.

"It is not the first time," said the Princess, "that I, on some such high far-seeing spot, have reflected how Nature, all clear, looks so pure and peaceful, and gives you the impression as if there were nothing contradictory in the world; and yet when you return back into the habitation of man, be it lofty or low, wide or narrow, there is ever somewhat to contend with, to battle with, to smooth and put to rights."

Honorio, who meanwhile was looking through the glass at the Town, exclaimed, "See! see! There is fire in the market!" They looked, and could observe some smoke; the flames were smothered in the daylight. "The fire spreads!" cried he, still looking through the glass: the mischief indeed now became noticeable to the good eyes of the Princess; from time to time you observed a red burst of flame, the smoke mounted aloft; and Prince-Uncle said: "Let us return; that is not good; I always feared I should see that misery a second time." They descended, got back to their horses. "Ride," said the Princess to the Uncle, "fast, but not without a groom: leave me Honorio; we will follow without delay." The Uncle felt the reasonableness, nay necessity of this; and started off down the waste stony slope, at the quickest pace the ground allowed.

As the Princess mounted, Honorio said: "Please your Excellency to ride slow! In the Town as in the Castle, the fire-apparatus is in perfect order;

the people, in this unexpected accident, will not lose their presence of mind. Here, moreover, we have bad ground, little stones and short grass; quick riding is unsafe; in any case, before we arrive, the fire will be got under." The Princess did not think so; she observed the smoke spreading, she fancied that she saw a flame flash up, that she heard an explosion; and now in her imagination all the terrific things awoke, which the worthy Uncle's repeated narrative of his experiences in that market-conflagration had too deeply implanted there.

Frightful doubtless had that business been; alarming and impressive enough to leave behind it, painfully through life long, a boding and image of its recurrence,—when in the night-season, on the great booth-covered market-space, a sudden fire had seized booth after booth, before the sleepers in these light huts could be shaken out of deep dreams: the Prince himself, as a wearied stranger arriving only for rest, started from his sleep, sprang to the window, saw all fearfully illuminated; flame after flame, from the right, from the left, darting through each other, rolls quivering towards him. The houses of the marketplace, reddened in the shine, seemed already glowing; threatened every moment to kindle, and burst forth in fire. Below, the element raged without let; planks cracked, laths crackled; the canvas flew abroad, and its dusky fire-peaked tatters whirled themselves round and aloft,—as if bad spirits, in their own element, with perpetual change of shape, were in capricious dance, devouring one another, and there and yonder, would dart-up out from their penal fire. And then, with wild howls, each saved what was at hand: servants and masters laboured to drag forth bales already seized by the flames; to snatch away yet somewhat from the burning shelves, and pack it into the chests, which too they must at last leave a prey to the hastening flame. How many a one could have prayed but for a moment's pause to the loud-advancing fire; as he looked round for the possibility of some device, and was with all his possessions already seized! One the one side, there burnt and glowed already what, on the other, still stood in dark night. Obstinate characters, will-strong men, grimly fronted the grim foe; and saved much, with loss of their eyebrows and hair.—Alas, all this waste confusion now arose anew before the fair spirit of the Princess; the gay morning prospect was all overclouded, and her eyes darkened; wood and meadow had put on a look of strangeness, of danger.

Entering the peaceful vale, heeding little its refreshing coolness, they were but a few steps onwards from the copious fountain of the brook which flowed by them, when the Princess descried, quite down in the thickets, something singular, which she soon recognised for the tiger: springing on, as she a short while ago had seen him painted, he came towards her; and this image, added to the frightful ones she was already busy with, made the strangest impression. "Fly, your Grace!" cried Honorio, "fly!" She turned her horse towards the steep hill they had just descended. The young man, rushing on towards the monster, drew his pistol and fired when he thought himself near enou h; but, alas, without effect; the tiger sprang to a side, the horse faltered, the provoked wild-beast followed his course, upwards straight after the Princess. She galloped, what her horse could, up the steep stony space; scarcely apprehending that so delicate a creature, unused to such exertion, could not hold out. It overdid itself, driven on by the necessitated Princess; it stumbled on the loose gravel of the steep, and again stumbled; and at last fell, after ent

efforts, powerless to the ground. The fair dame, resolute and dexterous, failed not instantly to get upon her feet; the horse too rose, but the tiger was approaching; though not with vehement speed; the uneven ground, the sharp stones seemed to damp his impetuosity; and only Honorio flying after him, riding with checked speed along with him, appeared to stimulate and provoke his force anew. Both runners, at the same instant, reached the spot where the Princess was standing by her horse: the Knight bent himself, fired, and with this second pistol hit the monster through the head, so that it rushed down; and now, stretched out in full length, first clearly disclosed the might and terror whereof only the bodily hull was left lying. Honorio had sprung from his horse; was already kneeling on the beast, quenching its last movements, and held his drawn hanger in his right hand. The youth was beautiful; he had come dashing on, as, in sports of the lance and the ring, the Princess had often seen him do. Even so in the riding-course would his bullet, as he darted by, hit the Turk's-head on the pole, right under the turban in the brow; even so would he, lightly prancing up, prick his naked sabre into the fallen mass, and lift it from the ground. In all such arts he was dexterous and felicitous; both now stood him in good stead.

"Give him the rest," said the Princess: "I fear he will hurt you with his claws."—"Pardon!" answered the youth: "he is already dead enough; and I would not hurt the skin, which next winter shall shine upon your sledge."—"Sport not," said the Princess: "whatsoever of pious feeling dwells in the depth of the heart unfolds itself in such a moment."—"I too," cried Honorio, "was never more pious than even now; and therefore do I think of what is joyfulest: I look at the tiger's fell only as it can attend you to do you pleasure."—"It would forever remind me," said she, "of this fearful moment."—"Yet is it," replied the youth with glowing cheeks, "a more harmless spoil than when the weapons of slain enemies are carried for show before the victor."—"I shall bethink me, at sight of it, of your boldness and cleverness; and need not add, that you may reckon on my thanks and the Prince's favour for your life long. But rise; the beast is clean dead; let us consider what is next: before all things rise!"—"As I am once on my knees," replied the youth, "once in a posture which in other circumstances would have been forbid, let me beg at this moment to receive assurance of the favour, of the grace which you vouchsafe me. I have already asked so often of your high Consort for leave and promotion to go on my travels. He who has the happiness to sit at your table, whom you honour with the privilege to entertain your company, should have seen the world. Travellers stream-in on us from all parts; and when a town, an important spot in any quarter of the world comes in course, the question is sure to be asked of us, Were we ever there? Nobody allows one sense, till one has seen all that: it is as if you had to instruct yourself only for the sake of others."

"Rise!" repeated the Princess: "I were loath to wish or request aught that went against the will of my Husband; however, if I mistake not, the cause why he has restrained you hitherto will soon be at an end. His intention was to see you ripened into a complete self-guided nobleman, to do yourself and him credit in foreign parts, as hitherto at court; and I should think this deed of yours was as good a recommendatory passport as a young man could wish for, to take abroad with him."

That, instead of a youthful joy, a certain mournfulness came over his face, the Princess had not time to observe, nor had he to indulge his emotion; for, in hot haste, up the steep, came a woman, with a boy at her hand, straight to the group so well known to us; and scarcely had Honorio, bethinking him, arisen, when they howling and shrieking cast themselves on the carcass; by which action, as well as by their cleanly, decent, yet particoloured and unusual dress, might be gathered that it was the mistress of this slain creature, and the black-eyed, black-locked boy, holding a flute in his hand, her son; weeping like his mother, less violent, but deeply moved, kneeling beside her.

Now came strong outbreakings of passion from this woman; interrupted indeed, and pulse-wise; a stream of words, leaping like a stream in gushes from rock to rock. A natural language, short and discontinuous, made itself impressive and pathetic: in vain should we attempt translating it into our dialects; the approximate purport of it we must not omit. "They have murdered thee, poor beast! murdered without need! Thou wert tame, and wouldst fain have lain down at rest and waited our coming; for thy footballs were sore, thy claws had no force left. The hot sun to ripen them was wanting. Thou wert the beautifulest of thy kind: who ever saw a kingly tiger so gloriously stretched-out in sleep, as thou here liest, dead, never to rise more? When thou awokest in the early dawn of morning, and openedst thy throat, stretching out thy red tongue, thou wert as if smiling on us; and even when bellowing, thou tookest thy food from the hands of a woman, from the fingers of a child. How long have we gone with thee on thy journeys; how long has thy company been useful and fruitful to us! To us, to us of a very truth, meat came from the eater, and sweetness out of the strong. So will it be no more. Woe! woe!"

She had not done lamenting, when over the smoother part of the Castle Mountain came riders rushing down; soon recognised as the Prince's Hunting-train, himself the foremost. Following their sport, in the backward hills, they had observed the fire-vapours; and fast through dale and ravine, as in fierce chase, taken the shortest path towards this mournful sign. Galloping along the stony vacancy, they stopped and stared at sight of the unexpected group, which in that empty expanse stood out so mark-worthy. After the first recognition, there was silence; some pause of breathing-time, and then what the view itself did not impart, was with brief words explained. So stood the Prince, contemplating the strange unheard-of incident; a circle round him of riders, and followers that had run on foot. What to do was still undetermined; the Prince intent on ordering, executing; when a man pressed forward into the circle; large of stature, particoloured, wondrously apparelled, like wife and child. And now the family, in union, testified their sorrow and astonishment. The man, however, soon restrained himself; bowed in reverent distance before the Prince, and said: "It is not the time for lamenting; alas, my lord and mighty hunter, the Lion too is loose; hither towards the mountains is he gone: but spare him, have mercy, that he perish not like this good beast."

"The Lion!" said the Prince: "Hast thou the trace of him?"—"Yes, Lord! A peasant down there, who had heedlessly taken shelter on a tree, directed me farther up this way, to the left; but I saw the crowd of men and horses here; anxious for tidings of assistance, I hastened hither."—"So

then," commanded the Prince, "draw to the left, Huntsmen; you will load your pieces, go softly to work; if you drive him into the deep woods, it is no matter: but in the end, good man, we shall be obliged to kill your animal: why were you improvident enough to let him loose?"—"The fire broke out," replied he; "we kept quiet and attentive; it spread fast, but at a distance from us; we had water enough for our defence; but a heap of powder blew up, and threw the brands on to us, and over our heads; we were too hasty, and are now ruined people."

The Prince was still busy directing; but for a moment all seemed to pause, as a man was observed hastily springing down from the heights of the old Castle; whom the troop soon recognised for the watchman that had been stationed there to keep the Painter's apartment, while he lodged there and took charge of the workmen. He came running, out of breath, yet in few words soon made known, That the Lion had laid himself down, within the high ring-wall, in the sunshine, at the foot of a large beech, and was behaving quite quietly. With an air of vexation, however, the man concluded: "Why did I take my rifle to town yesternight, to have it cleaned? he had never risen again, the skin had been mine, and I might all my life have had the credit of the thing."

The Prince, whom his military experiences here also stood in stead, for he had before now been in situations where from various sides inevitable evil seemed to threaten, said hereupon: "What surety do you give me that if we spare your Lion, he will not work destruction among us, among my people?"

"This woman and this child," answered the father hastily, "engage to tame him, and keep him peaceable, till I bring up the cage, and then we can carry him back unharmed and without harming any one."

The boy put his flute to his lips; an instrument of the kind once named soft, or sweet flutes; short-beaked like pipes: he, who understood the art, could bring out of it the gracefulest tones. Meanwhile the Prince had inquired of the watchman how the lion came up. "By the hollow-way," answered he, "which is walled-in on both sides, and was formerly the only entrance, and is to be the only one still: two footpaths, which led in elsewhere, we have so blocked-up and destroyed that no human being, except by that first narrow passage, can reach the Magic Castle which Prince Friedrich's talent and taste is making of it."

After a little thought, during which the Prince looked round at the boy, who still continued as if softly preluding, he turned to Honorio, and said: "Thou hast done much today, complete thy task. Secure that narrow path; keep your rifles in readiness, but do not shoot till the creature can no otherwise be driven back: in any case, kindle a fire, which will frighten him if he make downwards. The man and woman take charge of the rest." Honorio rapidly bestirred himself to execute these orders.

The child continued his tune, which was no tune; a series of notes without law, and perhaps even on that account so heart-touching: the bystanders seemed as if enchanted by the movement of a song-like melody, when the father with dignified enthusiasm began to speak in this sort:

"God has given the Prince wisdom, and also knowledge to discern that all God's works are wise, each after its kind. Behold the rock, how he stands

fast and stirs not, defies the weather and the sunshine; primeval trees adorn his head, and so crowned he looks abroad; neither if a mass rush away, will this continue what it was, but falls broken into many pieces and covers the side of the descent. But there too they will not tarry, capriciously they leap far down, the brook receives them, to the river he bears them. Not resisting, not contradictory, angular; no, smooth and rounded, they travel now quicker on their way, arrive, from river to river, finally at the ocean, whither march the giants in hosts, and in the depths whereof dwarfs are busy.

"But who shall exalt the glory of the Lord, whom the stars praise from Eternity to Eternity! Why look ye far into the distance? Consider here the bee: late at the end of harvest she still busily gathers; builds her a house, tight of corner, straight of wall, herself the architect and mason. Behold the ant: she knows her way, and loses it not; she piles her dwelling of grass-halms, earth-crumbs, and needles of the fir; she piles it aloft and arches it in; but she has laboured in vain, for the horse stamps, and scrapes it all in pieces: lo! he has trodden-down her beams, and scattered her planks; impatiently he snorts, and cannot rest; for the Lord has made the horse comrade of the wind and companion of the storm, to carry man whither he wills, and woman whither she desires. But in the Wood of Palms arose he, the Lion; with earnest step traversed the wildernesses; there rules he over all creatures; his might who shall withstand? Yet man can tame him; and the fiercest of living things has reverence for the image of God, in which too the angels are made, who serve the Lord and his servants. For in the den of Lions Daniel was not afraid; he remained fast and faithful, and the wild bellowing interrupted not his song of praise."

This speech, delivered with expression of a natural enthusiasm, the child accompanied here and there with graceful tones; but now, the father having ended, he, with clear melodious voice and skilful passaging, struck-up his warble; whereupon the father took the flute, and gave note in unison, while the child sang:

From the Dens, I, in a deeper,
Prophet's song of praise can hear;
Angel-host he hath for keeper,
Needs the good man there to fear?

Lion, Lioness, agazing,
Mildly pressing round him came;
Yea, that humble, holy praising,
It hath made them tame.

The father continued, accompanying this strophe with his flute; the mother here and there touched-in as second voice.

Impressive, however, in a quite peculiar degree, it was, when the child now began to shuffle the lines of the strophe into other arrangement; and thereby if not bring out a new sense, yet heighten the feeling by leading it into self-excitement:

Angel-host around doth hover,
Us in heavenly tones to cheer;
In the Dens our head doth cover,—
Needs the poor child there to fear?

For that humble holy praising
Will permit no evil nigh:
Angels hover, watching, gazing;
Who so safe as I?

Hereupon with emphasis and elevation began all three:

For th' Eternal rules above us,
Lands and oceans rules his will;
Lions even as lambs shall love us,
And the proudest waves be still.

Whetted sword to scabbard cleaving,
Faith and Hope victorious see:
Strong, who, loving and believing,
Prays, O Lord, to thee.

All were silent, hearing, hearkening; and only when the tones ceased could you remark and distinguish the impression they had made. All was as if appeased; each affected in his way. The Prince, as if he now first saw the misery that a little ago had threatened him, looked down on his spouse, who leaning on him forbore not to draw out the little embroidered handkerchief, and therewith covered her eyes. It was blessedness for her to feel her young bosom relieved from the pressure with which the preceding minutes had loaded it. A perfect silence reigned over the crowd; they seemed to have forgotten the dangers: the conflagration below; and above, the rising-up of a dubiously-reposing Lion.

By a sign to bring the horses, the Prince first restored the group to motion; he turned to the woman, and said: "You think, then, that, once find the Lion, you could, by your singing, by the singing of this child, with help of these flute-tones, appease him, and carry him back to his prison, unhurt and hurting no one?" They answered Yes, assuring and affirming; the castellan was given them as guide. And now the Prince started off in all speed with a few; the Princess followed slower, with the rest of the train: mother and son, on their side, under conduct of the warder, who had got himself a musket, mounted up the steeper part of the height.

Before the entrance of the hollow-way which opened their access to the Castle, they found the hunters busy heaping-up dry brushwood, to have, in any case, a large fire ready for kindling. "There is no need," said the woman: "it will all go well and peaceably, without that."

Farther on, sitting on a wall, his double-barrel resting in his lap, Honorio appeared; at his post, as if ready for every occurrence. However, he seemed hardly to notice our party; he sat as if sunk in deep thoughts, he looked round like one whose mind was not there. The woman addressed him with a prayer not to let the fire be lit; he appeared not to heed her words; she spoke on with vivacity, and cried: "Handsome young man, thou hast killed my tiger, I do not curse thee; spare my lion, good young man, I will bless thee."

Honorio was looking straight out before him, to where the sun on his course began to sink. "Thou lookest to the west," cried the woman; "thou dost well, there is much to do there; hasten, delay not, thou wilt conquer. But first conquer thyself." At this he appeared to give a smile; the woman stept

on; could not, however, but look back once more at him: a ruddy sun was irradiating his face; she thought she had never seen a handsomer youth.

"If your child," said the warder now, "with his fluting and singing, can, as you are persuaded, entice and pacify the Lion, we shall soon get mastery of him after, for the creature has lain down quite close to the perforated vaults through which, as the main passage was blocked up with ruins, we had to bore ourselves an entrance into the Castle-court. If the child entice him into this latter, I can close the opening with little difficulty; then the boy, if he like, can glide out by one of the little spiral stairs he will find in the corner. We must conceal ourselves; but I shall so take my place that a rifle-ball can, at any moment, help the poor child in case of extremity."

"All these precautions are unnecessary; God and skill, piety and a blessing, must do the work."—"May be," replied the warder; "however, I know my duties. First, I must lead you, by a difficult path, to the top of the wall, right opposite the vaults and opening I have mentioned: the child may then go down, as into the arena of the show, and lead away the animal, if it will follow him." This was done: warder and mother looked down in concealment, as the child descending the screw-stairs, showed himself in the open space of the Court, and disappeared opposite them in the gloomy opening; but forthwith gave his flute voice, which by and by grew weaker, and at last sank dumb. The pause was bodeful enough; the old hunter, familiar with danger, felt heart-sick at the singular conjuncture; the mother, however, with cheerful face, bending over to listen, showed not the smallest discomposure.

At last the flute was again heard; the child stept forth from the cavern with glittering satisfied eyes, the Lion after him, but slowly, and as it seemed with difficulty. He showed here and there desire to lie down; yet the boy led him in a half-circle through the few disleaved many-tinted trees, till at length, in the last rays of the sun, which poured-in through a hole in the ruins, he sat him down, as if transfigured in the bright red light; and again commenced his pacifying song, the repetition of which we also cannot forbear:

From the Dens, I, in a deeper,
Prophet's song of praise can hear;
Angel-host he hath for keeper,
Needs the good man there to fear?

Lion, Lioness, agazing,
Mildly pressing round him came;
Yea, that humble, holy praising,
It hath made them tame.

Meanwhile the Lion had laid itself down quite close to the child, and lifted its heavy right fore-paw into his bosom; the boy as he sung gracefully stroked it; but was not long in observing that a sharp thorn had stuck itself between the balls. He carefully pulled it out; with a smile, took the particoloured silk-handkerchief from his neck, and bound up the frightful paw of the monster; so that his mother for joy bent herself back with outstretched arms; and perhaps, according to custom, would have shouted and clapped applause, had not a hard hand-grip of the warder reminded her that the danger was not yet over.

Triumphantly the child sang on, having with a few tones preluded:

For th' Eternal rules above us,
Lands and oceans rules his will;
Lions even as lambs shall love us,
And the proudest waves be still.

Whetted sword to scabbard cleaving,
Faith and Hope victorious see:
Strong, who, loving and believing,
Prays, O Lord, to thee.

Were it possible to fancy that in the countenance of so grim a creature, the tyrant of the woods, the despot of the animal kingdom, an expression of friendliness, of thankful contentment could be traced, then here was such traceable; and truly the child, in his illuminated look, had the air as of a mighty triumphant victor; the other figure, indeed, not that of one vanquished, for his strength lay concealed in him; but yet of one tamed, of one given up to his own peaceful will. The child fluted and sang on, changing the lines according to his way, and adding new:

And so to good children bringeth
Blessed Angel help in need;
Fetters o'er the cruel flingeth,
Worthy act with wings doth speed.

So have tamed, and firmly iron'd
To a poor child's feeble knee,
Him the forest's lordly tyrant,
Pious Thought and Melody.

SUMMARY OF VOL. II.

SUMMARY.

LUTHER'S PSALM.

THE great Reformer's love of music and poetry, one of the most significant features in his character. His poetic feeling not so much expressed in fit Words as in fit Actions. And yet it is the same Luther, whether acting, speaking or writing. His Psalm, *Eine feste Burg ist unser Gott.* (p. 3.)

SCHILLER.

Correspondence between Schiller and Goethe. Natural curiosity respecting great men: Value of the scantiest memorials that will help to make them intelligible. It can be no true greatness, that a close inspection would abate a worthy admiration of. The letters of Schiller and Goethe: Their entire sincerity of style: Turn mostly on compositions, publications, philosophies. An instructive record of the mental progress of their respective writers. (p. 9.) —Schiller's mode of thought and utterance more European than national: His ready and general acceptance with foreigners. High struggle, and prophetic burden of every true Poet. Schiller's personal history. His life emphatically a literary one: something priestlike, almost monastic in its character. His parentage and youth: Schooling: Hardships and oppressions from the Duke of Würtemberg: Not in Law, or Medicine; nor in any marketable occupation, can his soul find content and a home. His restless struggling to get free. Publication of the *Robbers*. Escape from the harsh tyranny of the Duke. Henceforth a Literary Man; and need appear in no other character. (13.)—His mild, honest character everywhere gains him friends. His connexion with Goethe the most important event of his literary life: Their mutual esteem, and zealous coöperation. Schiller's quiet, unconquered heroism through fifteen years of unremitted pain. The foolish Happiness-controversy: The whole argument, like every other, lies in the confusion of language: True Welfare, and mere sensuous Enjoyment: Mind *versus* Matter. (27.)—Schiller's character as a man. In his life the social affections played no deeply absorbing part: It was towards the Ideal, not the Actual, that his faith and hope were chiefly directed: His habits were solitary; his chief business and pleasure

lay in silent meditation. Some account of his ordinary mode of life. He mingles little in the controversies of his time; and alludes to them only from afar. His high conception of the mission of the true Poet. His genius reflective rather than creative; philosophical and oratorical rather than essentially poetic. For the most part, the Common is to him still the Common. Closely connected with this imperfection, both as cause and consequence, is his singular want of Humour. Yet there is a tone in some of his later pieces breathing of the very highest region of Art. (33.)—Schiller's dramatic success. Illustrations of his mental progress; turbid ferocities of the *Robbers*, contrasted with the placidly victorious strength of his maturer works. The like progress visible in his smaller Poems: His *Alpenlied*. Schiller's Philosophic talent: Interest in Kant's System. His *Æsthetic Letters*. Schiller and Goethe. (41.)

THE NIBELUNGEN LIED.

About the year 1757, a certain antiquarian tendency in literature, a fonder, more earnest looking back into the Past began to manifest itself in all nations. Growth and fruit of this tendency in Germany. The *Nibelungen*, a kind of rude German Epos: It belongs specially to us English Teutones, as well as to the German. Northern Archæology, a chaos of immeasurable shadows: The *Heldenbuch*, the most important of these subsidiary Fictions, throws some little light on the *Nibelungen:* Outline of the Story. Early adventures of the brave Siegfried, whose history lies at the heart of the whole Northern Traditions: His Invulnerability, wonderful Sword Balmung, and Cloak of Darkness: His subsequent history belongs to the Song of the Nibelungen. (p. 55.)—Singular poetic excellence of that old Epic Song: Simplicity, and clear decisive ring of its language: Deeds of high temper, harsh self-denial, daring and death stand embodied in soft, quick-flowing, joyfully-modulated verse: Wonderful skill in the construction of the story; and the healthy subordination of the marvellous to the actual. Abstract of the Poem,—How Siegfried wooed and won the beautiful Chriemhild; and how marvellously he vanquished the Amazonian Brunhild for king Gunther: Heyday of peace and gladdest sunshine. Jealousy of Queen Brunhild: How the two queens rated one another; and how Chriemhild extinguished Brunhild. Brunhild in black revenge gets Siegfried murdered: Unhappy Chriemhild, her husband's grave is all that remains to her: Her terrible doomsday vengeance. (70).—Antiquarian researches into the origin of the *Nibelungen Lied:* Historical coincidences. The oldest Tradition, and the oldest Poem of Modern Europe. Who the gifted Singer may have been remains altogether dark: The whole spirit of Chivalry, of Love and heroic Valour, must have lived in him and inspired him: a true old Singer, taught of Nature herself! (96).

GERMAN LITERATURE OF THE FOURTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH CENTURIES.

Historical literary significance of *Reynard the Fox*. The Troubadour Period in general Literature, to which the Swabian Era in Germany answers. General decay of Poetry: Futile attempts to account for such decay: The world seems to have rhymed itself out; and stern business, not sportfully, but with harsh endeavour, was now to be done. Italy, for a time, a splendid exception in Dante and Petrarch. The change not a fall from a higher spiritual state to a lower; but rather, a passing from youth into manhood. (p. 107.)—Literature now became more and more Didactic, consisting of wise Apologues, Fables, Satires, Moralities: This Didactic Spirit reached its acme at the era of the Reformation. Its gradual rise: The *Stricker*, and others. Some account of Hugo von Trimberg: A cheerful, clear-sighted, gentle-hearted man, with a quiet, sly humour in him: His *Renner*, a singular old book; his own simple, honest, mildly decided character everywhere visible in it. (114.)—Boner, and his *Edelstein*, a collection of Fables done into German rhyme from Latin originals: Not so much a Translator as a free Imitator; he tells his story in his own way, and freely appends his own moral. Fable, the earliest and simplest product of Didactic Poetry: The Fourteenth Century an age of Fable in a wider sense: Narratives and Mysteries. A serious warning to Critics! Adventures of *Tyll Eulenspiegel*. (125.)—In the religious Cloisters also were not wanting men striving with purer enthusiasm after the highest problem of manhood, a life of spiritual Truth: Johann Tauler and Thomas à Kempis. On all hands an aspect of full progress: Robber Barons and Merchant Princes. The spirit of Inquiry, of Invention, conspicuously busy: Gunpowder, Printing, Paper, In Literature the Didactic, especially the Æsopic spirit became abundantly manifest. (136.)—*Reynard the Fox*, the best of all Apologues; for some centuries a universal household possession, and secular Bible: Antiquarian researches into its origin and history: Not the work of any single author, but a growth and contribution of many generations and countries. A rude, wild Parody of Human Life, full of meaning and high moral purpose: Its dramatic consistency: Occasional coarseness, and other imperfections. Philological interest of the old Low-German original: The language of our old Saxon Fatherland still curiously like our own. The Age of Apologue, like that of Chivalry and Love-singing, now gone. Where are now our People's-Books? (145.)

TAYLOR'S HISTORIC SURVEY OF GERMAN POETRY.

Upwards of half a century since German Literature began to make its way in England. Hannah More's trumpet-blast against these modern 'Huns and Vandals.' Our knowledge now becoming better, if only because more general. Claims of Mr. Taylor's Book to a respectful examination: Its value and shortcomings. (p. 159.)—What would be implied by a Complete History of German Poetry: The History of a nation's Poetry the essence of its History, political, economic, scientific, religious. Such a History of the Germans would not be wanting in peculiar human interest: Their poetical Infancy and Boyhood; Enthusiastic Youth; Free Manhood; Spiritual Vastation, and New Birth. (166.)—Mr. Taylor's *Historic Survey* a mere aggregate of fragmentary Notices, held together by the Bookbinder's packthread: Its incredible misstatements of facts, and general incorrectness and insufficiency. He goes through Germany, scenting out Infidelity with the nose of an ancient Heresy-hunter; though for opposite purposes. Mr. Taylor's whole Philosophy sensual; he recognizes nothing that cannot be weighed and measured, eaten and digested: Every fibre of him Philistine. (171.)—The best Essay in the book, that on Klopstock: Beautiful allegory of *The Two Muses*. Foolish admiration for Kotzebue and his like. His scepticism at least honest and worthy of respect. Literature fast becoming all in all to us, our Church, our Senate, our whole Social Constitution. Its tendency to a general European Commonweal; whereby the wisest in all nations may communicate and coöperate. (183.)

CHARACTERISTICS.

The healthy know not of their health, only the sick. Unity, agreement, always silent or soft-voiced; only discord noisily proclaims itself. (p. 193.)—Happy Unconsciousness of childhood: The beginning of Inquiry is Disease. Life itself a disease, a working incited by suffering. Conscious and Unconscious domains of human activity: Meditation. Genius ever a secret to itself. The healthy understanding, not Logical or argumentative, but Intuitive: Unconscious Spontaneity the characteristic of all right performance. Virtue, when it can be philosophised of, or has become aware of itself, is sickly and beginning to decline: The barrenest of all mortals, the Sentimentalist. (194.)—In Society man first feels what he is, first becomes what he can be. To figure Society as endowed with life, the statement of a fact rather than a metaphor. What the actual condition of Society? a difficulty for the wisest. In all vital things, an Artificial and a Natural. The vigorous ages of a Roman Commonwealth, and of *all* Commonwealths. Man's highest and sole blessedness to toil,

and know what to toil at. Healthy Literature, and unhealthy: So soon as Prophecy and inspired Poetry cease, Argumentation and jangling begin. (201.)—Silence and Mystery: Hymns to the Night: What mortals call Death, properly the beginning of Life. In the rudest mind some intimation of the greatness there is in Mystery. (205.)—Society in our days boastfully and painfully conscious of itself: So-called March of Intellect. Our whole relations to the Universe become an Inquiry, a Doubt. Self-consciousness not the disease, but the symptom and attempt towards cure. The outward or Physical diseases of our Society; a whole nosology of them. Our Spiritual condition no less sickly than our Physical. Instead of heroic martyr Conduct, we have 'Discourses on the Evidences;' endeavouring to make it probable such a thing as Religion exists. Literature but a branch of Religion, always participating in its character: The modern sin of View-hunting and scene-painting. Literature fast becoming one boundless self-devouring Review, like a sick thing 'listening to itself.' (207.)—Philosophy, except as Poetry and Religion, should have no being. The disease of Metaphysics. Doubt, the inexhaustible material whereon Action works; which only earnest Action can fashion into Certainty. How, by merely testing and rejecting what is not, shall we ever attain possession of what *is*? The profitable Speculation,—What is to be done; and How to do it? Only in free Effort can any blessedness be imagined for us. Eras of Faith; and our own era of Faithlessness: The Godlike vanished from the world. To the better order of minds any mad joy of Denial has long since ceased. The Old has passed away, and Time still in pangs of travail with the New. (212.)—Friedrich Schlegel's *Lectures*, and Mr. Hope's *Essay*, symbols of the two Extremes of our whole modern system of Thought; its effete Spiritualism, and dead decomposition of Materialistic jargon. Human Progress: Universal law of Change and Growth. This age also not wholly without its Prophets. Utilitarian problems and failures: Given a world of Knaves, to produce an Honesty from their united action. Strange light-gleams: Age of Miracles; as it ever was, is, and will be. He that has an eye and a heart can even now say—Why should I falter? Behind and before each one of us lies a whole Godlike Eternity, of inheritance and of possibility. (219.)

GOETHE'S PORTRAIT.

Goethe, a man well worth looking at. His kingly Head a very palace of Thought. A most royal work appointed to be done there. This Rag-Fair of a world all transfigured, and authentically revealed to be still holy, still divine. (p. 231.)—Two great men sent amongst us: Bonaparte, like an all-devouring earthquake, hurling kingdom over kingdom; Goethe, the mild-shining, inaudible Light, making Chaos once more into a Creation. The poorest Life no idle dream, but a solemn, earnest reality. (232.)

DEATH OF GOETHE.

Goethe died at Weimar, 22d March 1832: His last words, a greeting of the new-awakened Earth; his last movement, to work at his appointed task. A death full of greatness and sacredness: If his course was like the Sun's, so also was his going down. In the death of a good man, Eternity seen looking through Time. (p. 235.)—A New Era began with Goethe, the ulterior tendencies of which are yet unmanifested. The real Force, which in this world all things must obey, is Insight, Spiritual Vision and Determination. Honour to him who first 'through the impassable paves a road.' Goethe's Works. To how many hearers, languishing, nigh dead, in the airless dungeons of Unbelief, has the assurance of such a man come like tidings of deliverance! The unwearied Workman now rests from his labours; while the fruit of them is growing, and to grow. (237.)

BIOGRAPHY.

Biography, or human insight into human personality, the basis of all that can interest a human creature. (p. 247.)—Conversation, almost wholly biographic and autobiographic. Even in Art and highest Art, we can nowise forget the Artist; the biographic interest inevitably comprising its deepest and noblest meaning. History, in its best and truest form, the essence of innumerable Biographies. Modern 'Histories' of the Philosophic kind; and their dreary interminable vacuity. Fictitious Narratives, or mimic Biographies: The inspired Speaker, and the uninspired Babbler. The Foolishest of existing mortals. (248.)—Sauerteig on the indispensability and significance of Reality. The old Mythologies were once Philosophies, and the old Epics *believed* Histories. Imagination but a poor affair when it has to part company with Understanding. Belief, the first condition of all spiritual Force whatsoever. Dreary modern Epics; and their uncredited, incredible Supernatural 'Machinery.' Even the *probable*, however skilfully wrought, is but the Shadow of some half-seen Reality. A whole epitome of the Infinite lies enfolded in the Life of every Man. Not the material, only the Seer and Poet wanting. Great is Invention, but that is but a poor sort with which Belief is not concerned: Its highest exercise, not to invent Fiction; but to invent or bring forth *new Truth*. Interest of the smallest historical *fact*, as contrasted with the grandest *fictitious* event: Momentary glimpse of an actual, living Peasant of the year 1651: The Past all holy to us: The poorest adventure of some poorest Outcast, after seventy years are come and gone, has meaning and unfathomable instruction for us. (251.)—Secret for being graphic: An open

loving Heart the beginning of all knowledge. Literary froth, and literary substance: The multitudinous men, women, and children, that make up the Army of British Authors. James Boswell: White of Selborne. One good Biography in England, *Boswell's Johnson.* (257.)

BOSWELL'S LIFE OF JOHNSON.

Mr. Croker's editorial peculiarities and deficiencies. (p. 263.)—Boswell, a man whose bad qualities lay open to the general eye: What great and genuine good was in him, nowise so self-evident. His true *Hero-worship* for poor rusty-coated, rough old Samuel Johnson. His uncouth symbolic relation to his decrepit, death-sick Era. That loose-flowing, careless-looking Work of his, a picture by one of Nature's own Artists. His grand intellectual talent an *unconscious* one, of far higher reach and significance than Logic. Poor Bozzy an ill-assorted, glaring mixture of the highest and the lowest. Johnson's own Writings stand on a quite inferior level to this *Johnsoniad* of Boswell: It shows us objects that in very deed existed; it is all *true.* (269.)—What a pathetic, sacred, in every sense poetic meaning is implied in that one word, *Past!* This Book of Boswell's will give us more real insight into the History of England during those days, than any book taking upon itself this special aim. Robertson's 'History of Scotland.' How 'Histories' are written. Boswell's conversational jottings, no infringement of social privacy. Man properly an *incarnated* Word: Out of Silence comes strength. Thinkest thou that because no Boswell is there to note thy jargon, it therefore dies and is harmless? (276.)—Our interest in Biography considerably modified by the dull servile imitancy of mankind. Significant resemblances of Men and Sheep. Mystic power of Imitancy and Association. Amid the dull millions are scattered here and there leading, original natures; with eye to *see,* and will to *do.* Such Men properly the synopsis and epitome of the age in which they live; whose Biographies are above all things worth having. Of such chosen men, although of their humbler ranks, was Samuel Johnson; his existence no idle Dream, but a Reality which he transacted *awake.* As the highest Gospel was a Biography, so is the Life of every good man still an indubitable Gospel. (282.)—The Contradiction of Inward and Outward, which yawns wide enough in every Life, in Johnson's wider than in most. His calling by nature, rather towards Active than Speculative life; as a Doer of Work, he had shone even more than as Speaker of the Word. His disposition for *royalty* in his early boyhood. College life; proud as the proudest, poor as the poorest: 'Mistaken' estimate of Christian Scholarship. Ushership at Market Bosworth: 'Bread and water of affliction, so bitter that he could not swallow them. Tries Literature. His kind, true, brave-hearted Wife. Young gentlemen boarded, and

taught. Privations and trials of Authorship: Its transition period, from the protection of Patrons to that of the Public. Johnson the first Author of any significance, who faithfully lived by the day's work of his craft: His sturdy rebellion against the Chesterfield 'encumbrances.' (286.)—Johnson's Era wholly divided against itself. How was a noble man, resolute for the Truth, to act in it? Glory to our brave Samuel, who once more gave the world assurance of a Man! Wrong, not only different from Right, but infinitely different: Johnson's Religion as the light of life to him. His rugged literary labours: His insignificant-looking 'Parliamentary Debates,' the origin of our stupendous Fourth Estate. So poor is he, his Wife must leave him, and seek shelter among other relations: Could not remember the day he had passed free from pain: Manfully makes the best of his hard lot. The fantastic article called 'Fame,' of little other than a poor market value. Thy Fame! Unhappy mortal, where will it and thou be in some fifty years? (297.)—Gradually a little circle gathers round the Wise man. In his fifty-third year, he is beneficed by royal bounty. Real Primate of all England. The *last* of many things, Johnson was the last genuine English Tory. The highest Courage not the Courage to die decently, but to live manfully. Johnson's talent of silence: Where there is nothing farther to be *done*, there shall nothing more be *said*. His thorough Truthfulness, and clear hatred of every form of Cant. Few men have had a more merciful, tenderly affectionate nature than rough old Samuel. Catherine Chambers's death-bed: The market-place at Uttoxeter. Johnson's Politeness: His Prejudices: His culture and sympathies wholly English. Samuel Johnson and David Hume, embodiments of the two grand spiritual Antagonisms of their time: Whoso should combine the intrepid Candour, and decisive scientific Clearness of the one, with the Reverence, Love and devout Humility of the other, were the whole man of a new time. (308.)

GOETHE'S WORKS.

The greatest epoch in a man's life, not always his death; yet it is always the most noticeable. A transition, out of visible Time into invisible Eternity. (p. 325.)—The Greatness of Great Men. *Hero-Worship*, the only creed which can never grow obsolete. Man never altogether a clothes-horse; under the clothes is always a body and a soul. Difference between God-creation and Tailor-creation. The Great Man of an age, the most important phenomenon therein. Women, born worshippers of Greatness, either real or hypothetical. Of all rituals, that of Self-worship the most faithfully observed. (327.)—Greatness of Bonaparte and of Goethe contrasted. Parliamentary wool-gathering: The great desideratum, to produce a few members *worth* electing. Modern funeral celebrations, little better than solemn parodies. (336.)—The

summary of each man's works, the Life he led. Goethe's *Wahrheit und Dichtung.* At no period of the World's History can a gifted man be born when he will not find enough to do: Goethe's peculiar perplexities and victories. His riant, joyful childhood; kind plenty in every sense encircling him: A beautiful Boy; the picture of his early years among our most genuine poetic Idyls. His parents. The Victory at Bergen: His Father's grim defiance and hatred of the French. His Father, with occasional subsidiary tutors, his schoolmaster. Old Frankfort notabilities: The *Judengasse:* Von Reineck: Hofrath Huisgen: Workmen and workshops. Beautiful Gretchen, and Goethe's first experience of natural magic. (339.)—At Leipzig University: Interview with Gottsched: Religious perplexities; sickness; returns home. The World-Poet, destined by paternal judgment for a Lawyer. To Strasburg. The good Frederike: Is Goethe a bad man, or not a bad man? Jung Stilling's testimony. His 'goodness' and 'badness' not quite easily taken stock of. Intercourse with Herder. The German intellectual Chaos: Goethe's allotted task therein. His first literary productions. Established at Weimar. (351.)—The inward life of Goethe nobly recorded in the long series of his Writings. *Faust*, the passionate cry of the world's despair, proclaiming, as amid the wreck of Time, —It is ended! *Wilhelm Meister*, an emblem of warm, hearty, sunny human Endeavour; with as yet no recognition of Divinity: In the *Wanderjahre*, melodious Reverence becomes once more triumphant; and deep all-pervading Faith both speaks and sings. A tribute of gratitude from 'Fifteen Englishmen.' Goethe the Uniter and victorious Reconciler of the most distracted age since the Introduction of Christianity. What Strength actually is, and how to try for it. Goethe's noble power of insight: For him, as for Shakspeare, the world lies all translucent, encircled with Wonder: His figurativeness lies in the very centre of his being: The majestic Calmness of both; perfect tolerance for all men and things. Excellencies of Goethe's style. If Shakspeare were the greater nature, he was also less cultivated, and more careless. Goethe's Spiritual History, the ideal emblem of all true men's in these days: Let us mark well the road he fashioned for himself, and in the dim weltering Chaos rejoice to find a paved way. Goethe's Political abstinence. His Life and his Writings a possession to the world forever. (362.)

CORN-LAW RHYMES.

Smelfungus's despair at the present condition of Poetry: The end having come, it is fit that we end. (p. 377.)—And yet, if the whole welkin hang over-cast in drizzly dinginess, the feeblest speck of blue will not be unwelcome. The Corn-Law Rhymer, one of that singular class who really have something to say; he has *believed*, and therefore is again believable. A Sheffield Worker

in brass and iron; but no 'Uneducated Poet,' such as dilettante patronage delights to foster. A less misfortune, in these strange days, to be trained among the Uneducated classes, than among the Educated: Few Great Men ever nursed with any conscious eye to their vocation. In the poorest cottage are Books, is One Book, with an interpreting response to whatever is Deepest in man. Shakspeare's Learning: The grand schoolmaster is Practice,—Work. Unspeakable advantages of uneducated Working classes, over educated Unworking. (378.)—The Corn-Law Rhymer's sturdy, defiant attitude: An earnest, truth-speaking, *genuine* man. Strong and beautiful thoughts not wanting in him. A life of painfulness, toil, insecurity, scarcity; yet he fronts it like a man: Affection dwells with Danger, all the holier for the stern environment. Not as a rebel does he stand; yet as a free man, spokesman of free men, not far from rebelling against much. He feels deeply the frightful condition of our entire Social Affairs; and sees in Bread-tax the summary of all our evils. The black colours of his Life do not hide from him that God's world, if made into a House of Imprisonment, can also be a House of Prayer. The primary idea of all Poetry, Time resting on Eternity. Errors and shortcomings. He has looked, unblinded, into the prophetic Book of Existence, and read many little passages there: The Poor Grinder; the Poacher; the Workman's Sabbath. (384.)—The Workhouse, the bourne whither all these actors and Workers are tragically bound: Must it, then, grow worse and worse, till the last brave heart is broken in England? All Reform except a moral one unavailing. The Rhapsody of 'Enoch Wray,' an inarticulate, half-audible Epic; a blind aged man, himself a ruin, encircled with the ruin of a whole Era. To the Working portion of the Aristocracy, such a Voice from their humble working Brother will be both welcome and instructive: To the Idle portion it may be unwelcome enough. The case of Balaam the son of Beor: Balaam's occupation gone. A parting word of admonition: Poetry, or Prose? The Socrates'-Demon, such as dwells in every mortal. The Corn-Law Rhymer already a king, even more than many now crowned as such. (396.)

ON HISTORY AGAIN.

Fragment of an Inaugural Discourse delivered before the 'Society for the Diffusion of Common Honesty.' (p. 405.)—History the most profitable of all studies: The Message, or Letter of Instructions, which all Mankind delivers to each man. Immeasurable imperfection of our highest Historians: Of the *thing* now gone silent, called Past, how much do we know? Nature, however, not blamable: Man's plentiful equipment for publishing himself, by Tongue, Pen and Printing-Press. His chief wants, want of Honesty and of Understanding: The event worthiest to be known, likeliest of all to be least spoken

of. (405.)—Threatenings of an Historic Deluge. History, before it can become Universal History, needs of all things to be compressed. Wise Memory and wise Oblivion: Oblivion the dark page, whereon Memory writes in characters of Light. Imperfections enough in practice: And yet only what bears fruit is at last rememberable. Historical perspective. History the true Epic Poem, and universal Divine Scripture. (409.)

DIDEROT.

The *Acts* of the *Christian Apostles*, and the *Acts* of the French Philosophes: Difference in quality and in copiousness. (p. 415.)—Even stupid Memoirs better than mere Novels. The History of the Eighteenth Century of Paris, not yet condensed into intelligibility. Whether sent of God or of the Devil, it is on ground of their tillage that we now have to plough and sow. (416.)—End of a Social System: No one can see such results of his labour as the Destroyer: The *Siècle de Louis Quinze*. Denis Diderot and his life, the significant epitome of all this. Every man contains in himself a whole Spirit-Kingdom, and Reflex of the All; which only He that created can rightly understand. Diderot's hasty reckless manner of living and writing. Naigeon's *Life of Diderot* a foolish failure. The zeal of *the Devil's* house had eaten him up. Imperfect materials for any right biography of the Man. (417.)—Diderot's birth, parentage and schooling. The Jesuits recognise the boy's capabilities, and entice him to join them: Their Devil-serving skill and zeal a melancholy admonition to better men. The Diderot family. Young Denis's decided disinclination for any recognised profession. His dashing, volatile, precarious manner of life: Gives lessons in Mathematics; makes Sermons to order; but will settle to nothing. Walks chiefly in the subterranean shades of Rascaldom. A French poor-devil of a writer. Denis in love: Marriage: His excellent wife; and his scoundrel treatment of her. Translations of English: Shaftesbury's *Characteristics:* Original authorship. The History of Literature, especially for the last two centuries, our proper Church History. In Diderot's time, the Bookselling interest not yet drowned in the putrid deluge of Puffery. French Philosophism and French Revolution. Glimpses of Parisian Life, as shown in Diderot's Letters: Voltaire; D'Alembert; Rousseau; Grimm; Helvetius's Game-Preserves; Philosophes and Philosophesses. (422.)—Struggles, warfares and persecutions of Divine Philosophy: Its anomalous relations to Foreign Crowned Heads: Imbecile meddling of Louis and his Government. Diderot's incredible activity, and shrill-voiced energy. How Lebreton nefariously garbled his proof-sheets. The Baron d'Holbach's philosophical orgies: Heyday of Unbelief, Blasphemy and Obscenity. Diderot's free, open-handed life in Paris: His spiteful gossiping women friends, and famishing scoundrels.

What little service renown can do him, he now enjoys. Of all literary men Diderot the least of a self-listener. Generous help of the Northern Cleopatra. Visits Petersburg. Old age drawing on. His *Vie de Sénèque:* Seneca, our niceliest-proportioned Half-and-half; 'the father of all such as wear shovel-hats.' Diderot's death. (445.)—Diderot's mind of extraordinary openness and versatility: a first-class literary hodman. Influence of Circumstances on character: Diderot's Polemical Philosophism and Atheism, the fruit of the age he lived in. Inevitable Atheism of mere metaphysical Logic-chopping. A *probable* God! The Universe *not* 'a Machine;' nor God a mere 'Architect,' who having made it once, now sits apart and sees it go. The Atheist false; but not so cowardly a lie as the clamourer for a theoretical God, whose *life* bears no witness to his Presence. The Mechanical System of Thought, in its essence, Atheistic. (456.)—That 'the Highest cannot be spoken of in words,' a truth Diderot had not dreamt of: To him the Sanctuary of Man's Soul stood perennially shut; where his hand ceased to grope, the World ended. The notable extreme of a man guiding himself with the least spiritual Belief thinking man perhaps ever had. All possible spiritual perversions included under that grossest one of 'proselyting Atheism.' The Marriage Covenant, a mere self-destructive solecism: The only 'eternal constancy,'—constant change: Practical consequences of such doctrine. What a feeling, in the ancient devout deep soul, which of Marriage made *a Sacrament!* Diderot's uncleanness and utter shamelessness: How shall he for whom nothing, that cannot be jargoned of in debating-clubs, exists, have any faintest forecast of the depth and significance of SILENCE; of the sacredness of 'Secrets known to all'? (462.)—Diderot's theory of 'Virtue synonymous with Pleasure,' contradicted by the stern experience of all men. Self-denial the beginning, if not the end, of all moral action. Diderot's fluent and brilliant Talk: As a Writer, hasty, flimsy, polemic; with gleams of a deeper vision peering through. Excellence of his Pictorial Criticisms: Goethe's translation of his *Essay on Painting.* The realms of Art not wholly unvisited by him: *Jacques le Fataliste: Neveu de Rameau.* Diderot not a coward; nor yet in any sense a brave man: What duties were easy for him, he did; and happily Nature had rendered several easy. French Philosophism, in the light of Universal History; compared with the rude Thoughts and Doings of those 'Juifs misérables:' Omnipotence and fruitfulness of BELIEF. (465.)

COUNT CAGLIOSTRO.

FLIGHT FIRST.

The *life* of every man a most indubitable Poem, and Revelation of Infinity: All named and unnamable sorts, from the highest heroic Strophe to the lowest ribald Pasquil and libel on Humanity. (p. 477.)—The grand sacred Epos, or

Bible of World-History: All working and knowing, a faint interpreting and showing-forth of the infinite *Mystery of Life*. Different *manner* of reading and uttering: The earnest Hebrew Readers; whose reading is still sacred, still *true:* Gorgeous semi-sensual Grandeurs and Splendours of the early Oriental Magi: Greek Consecration of the Flesh, and revelation of the Infinite. Wearisome iteration and reiteration, grown obsolete, of our modern readings. (478.)—Even the biography of an utter Scoundrel at times worth reading: The only thing at once wholly despicable and forgettable, your half-knave, he who is neither true nor false. If we cannot have a Speaker and Doer of Truth, let us have the melancholy pleasure of beholding a decided Liar. Cagliostro, really a Liar of the first magnitude; thoroughpaced in all provinces, heights and depths of lying. (480.)—Birth and Boyhood of the future Prince of Scoundrels: Poverty, idleness and hopeful impudence of young Beppo. Not seeing his way to be 'a gentleman,' he decides to be 'an ecclesiastic.' Intrusted to the keeping of a Convent-Apothecary: First elements of medico-chemical conjurorship. Short roads to Enjoyment, and consequent afflictions and sore contradictions. A touch of grim Humour unfolds itself in the youth: He had now outgrown their monk-discipline, and quits it forever. (486.)—Returns home to Palermo, and tries Painting and general Scoundrelism. Wheresoever a stroke of mischief is to be done, a slush of enjoyment to be swallowed, there is he with all ebullient impulses ready. Finds a profitable and lasting resource in Forgery. Of a brawling, choleric temper: Visibly rising to a perfected Professor of Swindlery. A Treasure-digging dodge, and its catastrophe. The young Raven is now fledged for flying, and soars off. (490.)

FLIGHT LAST.

Old Feudal Europe fallen a-dozing to die. Her next awakening, the stern Avatar of *Democracy*, and new-birth into a new Industrial Age. (p. 494.)—Portentous extent and variety of Quackery and Quacks in that stertorous fever-sleep of our European world. Putrescence not more the scene of unclean creatures in the world physical, than Social Decay is of quacks in the world moral. National suffering ever preceded by national Crime. Dishonesty the raw material not of Quacks only, but also of Dupes. Irreversible death-doom (495.)—Beppo's adventurous haps and mishaps in that wide-weltering life-in-death. Gift of Fore-knowledge wisely denied. Small beginnings: Forges pen-drawings out of Engravings. Marries, in a country too prone to celibacy, the beautiful Lorenza Feliciani: Domestic privations. In the charms of his Lorenza, 'a Future confused and immense:' They traffic accordingly, with much dexterity. The Count, as he now styles himself, on his own side not idle. Faded gentlemen of quality, and faded dames of ditto. Potions, washes, charms and love-philtres: The Greatest Happiness of the greatest number. (498.)

—As one luxuriant branch of industry withers and drops off, others must be pushed into budding. Cagliostro in England: Successes and tribulations. Freemasonry; Grand-Cophtaship; Renovator of the Universe; Spirit-Mediums, and Phosphoric Manifestations unutterable. The dog pockets money enough, and can seem to despise money. Cagliostro's Gift of Tongue. Generic difference between speaking and public-speaking: How to acquire the miraculous gift of long-eared eloquence. Power of Belief however infinitesimal. The Cagliostric nimbus of Enchantment: Even the good Lavater could not quite see through him. (504.)—Successes and reverses: Visits Petersburg, but quickly decamps. Mephistopheles's mortifying experience with Margaret renewed for Cagliostro: 'Count M.' and his *Cagliostro Unmasked:* Such reverses but specks in the blaze of the meridian Sun. What the brilliant-looking Count and Countess were to themselves, and to each other: Cagliostro's Portrait: His probable Soliloquy, and spiritual salve for his own sores. At Strasburg, in fullest blossom and proudest radiance: The Prince Cardinal de Rohan, the inflammablest, most open-handed Dupe he ever snared. Tragedy of the *Diamond Necklace* suddenly intervenes, and Dupe and Duper are flung to the dogs. (517.)—Cagliostro again in England, living as he can: A touch of his old mocking Humour. Goethe's visit to his Family at Palermo. Count Cagliostro now rapidly proceeds with his Fifth Act: Destiny has her nets around him; they are straitening, straitening: He is *ginned.* Cagliostro's Workday ended; only his *account* remains to be settled.—To me also a Capability has been intrusted; shall I work it out, manlike, into Faithfulness, and Doing; or, quacklike, into Eatableness, and Similitude of Doing? (526.)

DEATH OF EDWARD IRVING.

Edward Irving's warfare closed, if not in victory, yet in invincibility: a man of antique heroic nature, in questionable modern garniture, which he could not wear. (p. 539.)—What the Scottish uncelebrated Irving was, they that have only seen the London celebrated and distorted one can never know: O foulest Circean draught, poison of Popular Applause! Wasted and worn to death amid the fierce confusion: The freest, brotherliest, bravest human soul. (540.)

APPENDIX.

No. 1.

THE TALE.

Rumours and mis-rumours concerning Goethe's Tale of Tales: A genuine English Translation now handed-in for judgment. (p. 545.)—Phantasmagory not Allegory. A wonderful Emblem of our wonderful and woful Transition Age. Clue to the significance of the several Figures in the Poem. Imagination, in her Works of Art, should play like a sort of music upon us: She herself cannot condition and bargain; she must wait what shall be given her. (546.)—Metaphysical Subtilty and Audacity, the first flickerings, and audible announcement, of the New Age waiting to be born. How they press poor old Spiritual Tradition into their service; and the havoc they make with him: They give him Wisdom which he cannot use; but have no power to contribute the least to his wonted Nourishment. (551.)—The Wisdom, which toil-worn Tradition could not and dared not appropriate, is eagerly devoured by newly-awakened Speculative Thought: Glory of Comprehending, and of sympathy with Nature. How Logical Acuteness is apt to despise Experimental Philosophy; and how Philosophy gets the best of the bargain. How can poor Sceptical Dexterity ever find the way, across the Time-River of stormy Human Effort, to the unutterable repose and blessedness of Spiritual Affection? The proffered Shadow of Superstition: Noontide Bridge of Speculative Science. (552.)—Experimental Thought would fain decipher the forms and intimations of the impending Future: Advent and coöperation of Poetic Insight. The 'open secret' of the Coming Change. (554.)—Poetic Insight or Intuitive Perception, wedded to Practical Endeavour now grown decrepit and garrulous. In the absence of Insight, poor old Practicality is surprised and disconcerted by a visitation of Logic: Death of their foolish little household Pet; which can now only become 'a true companion,' by 'the touch' of Spiritual Affection. (556.)—Practical Endeavour trudging on, sullen and forlorn, is cunningly robbed by the Shadow of newly-revived Superstition. Old Tradition doggedly insists on his dues; but is not unwilling the Time-River should bear the loss.

The individual 'hand' becomes 'invisible,' when pledged in the World-Stream of mingled Human Effort. (557.)—The new Kingly Intellect of the new unborn Time, painfully yearning for a purity and Singleness of Love, which, till it learn the 'fourth' and deepest 'secret,' can never belong to it. Invisible superfluity of Logic, in the Light of noonday intelligence. Pure Spiritual Affection, the New Love which must inspire and sanctify the New Age, as yet only powerful to produce wretchedness and death: At such Birth-time of the World, the greatest misery is the greatest blessing. (559.)—Strange, gathering omens: Speculative Intelligence, however brilliant and clear-seeing, not the fulfilment of the Blessed Promise. The richest Kingly Intellect sees itself farther from the spirit of Holiness than the lowest, poorest, faithful affection. Voluntary self-sacrifice begins: Blessed death, better than an outcast life. (560.)—All good influences combine to succour and sustain the One, who by Courage wins the secret of the Age. Spiritual Contagion: Heroic Self-sacrifice the order of the Day. (563.)—Death, but a passing from Life to Life. The Temple of the Future, and the Old-New Altar within the Temple. Our foolish Age of Transition passes utterly away; and a New Universal Kingdom, of Wisdom, Majesty and Heroic Strength, inspired by the still omnipotence of Holy Love, is ushered into Life. An individual suffices not, but He who combines with many at the proper Hour. (565.)

No. 2.

NOVELLE.

Parable of the bright Morningtide of Life: Its joyful duties, and hopeful sorrows. Openness to all true influences of Nature and Art: Mutability and its lessons. (p. 573.)—Manifold relationship and significance of human Industry and Enterprise. How man delights to excite himself by hypothetical Terror. Sunshine and aspiring effort: Noontide peace, and fulness of content. (575.)—Hypothetical Terror becomes actual Danger. Presence of mind, readiness, personal courage: Danger averted by the destruction of what is dangerous. Mystic intimations of deeper, wider instincts. (578.)—How the Dangerous may be tamed into order, and thus into a higher than personal Security. All things obedient to the Highest Wisdom. The truest Courage, childlike Trust in God: The only final Safety, to be in the Divine Harmony of his omnipotent Love. (581.)

END OF VOL. II.

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